

# CINEFANTASTIQUE

SPECIAL DOUBLE-ISSUE

January

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SPACE NINE

## STAR TREK VOYAGER



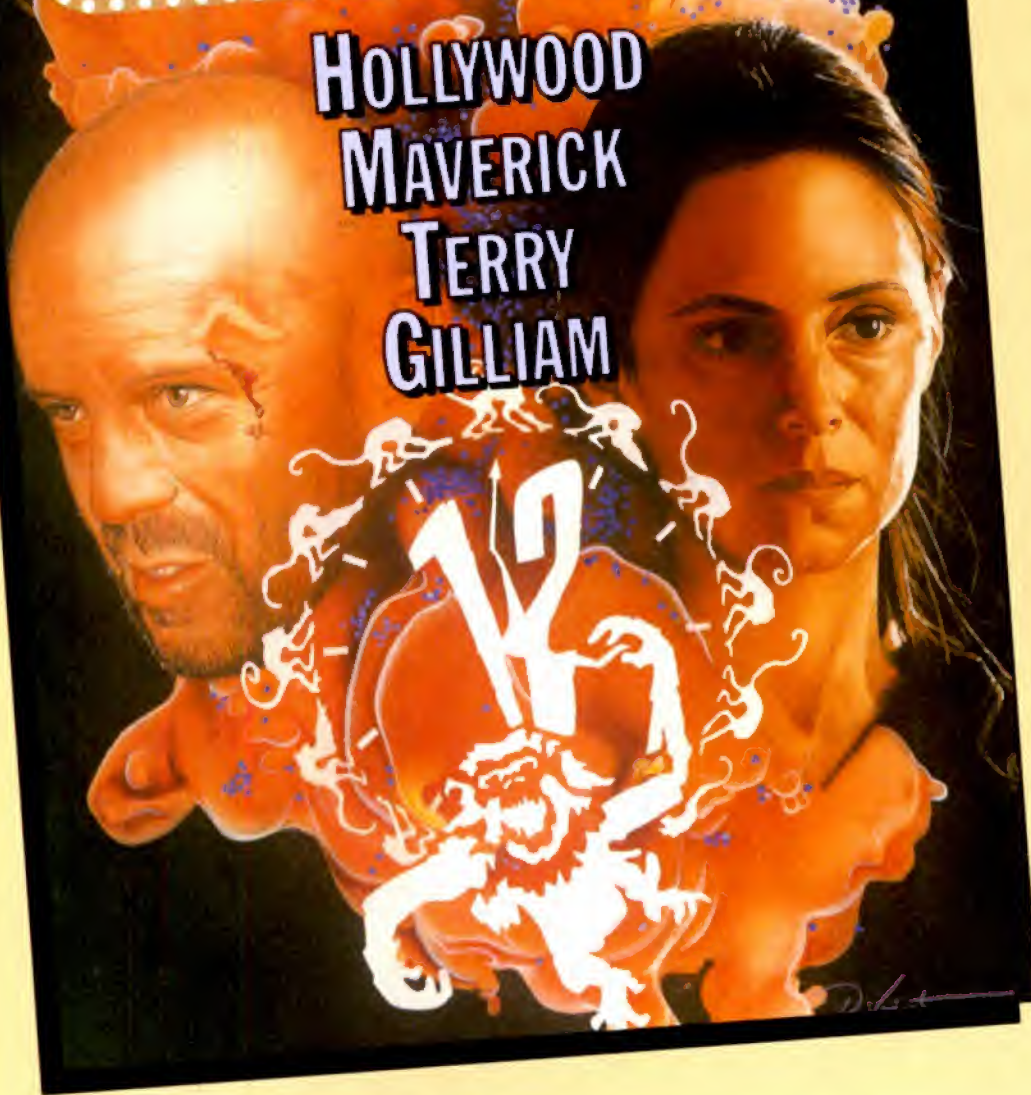
GILLIAM ON "12 MONKEYS"

QUENTIN TARANTINO'S  
"FROM DUSK TILL DAWN"



# CINEFANTASTIQUE

HOLLYWOOD  
MAVERICK  
TERRY  
GILLIAM



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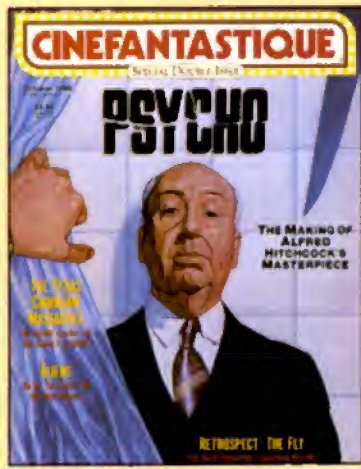
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The magazine with a "Sense of Wonder."

JANUARY 1996

STAR TREK spoken here! Welcome to our sixth annual recap of science fiction's first franchise. Though some die-hards are still pining for the adventures of THE NEXT GENERATION since they've been put out to movie pasture, VOYAGER has made a strong impression in its first year and DEEP SPACE NINE has inaugurated some dramatic improvements, casting it more in the adventure mold that founder Gene Roddenberry established for his enduring final frontier.

Resident STAR TREK expert Dale Kutzera reports from the sets of both series, with profiles of the actors as well as the behind-the-scenes creators—the producers, writers, directors and effects artists—who provide both series with production values that are second to none in episodic television. Kutzera pays special attention to the design work behind VOYAGER, from the look of the series' new starship and its bridge, to the show's majestic main title design, including its eye-opening effects work which has been improved with the introduction of the latest CGI innovations.

1996 marks the 30th Anniversary of STAR TREK, which debuted on NBC-TV September 8, 1966. From this historical vantage point critic Thomas Doherty takes a look at the health of the franchise and what the proliferation of Trek means for fans, as well as the mainstream audience. VOYAGER and DEEP SPACE NINE are viewed in the context of STAR TREK's long evolution, with the newer ensemble casts seen as a reflection of the times on the template of Gene Roddenberry's original concept.

For those readers who haven't caught the Trek bug and continue to wonder why this magazine devotes so much attention to a television show, I have this answer: with the exception of increasingly rare theatrical forays like Terry Gilliam's TWELVE MONKEYS, also profiled in this issue, STAR TREK is the best there is in science fiction.

Frederick S. Clarke



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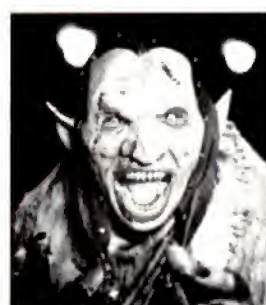
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## EAGERLY AWAITED

### TALES FROM THE CRYPT PRESENTS: BORDELLO OF BLOOD (Universal)

Last January, the first TALES FROM THE CRYPT feature, DEMON KNIGHT, turned out to be a surprisingly entertaining horror effort that had little to do with its namesake HBO series or the old E.C. comic book. Likewise, this effort is based on a pre-existing script by BACK TO THE FUTURE team of Robert Zemeckis and Bob Gale. (Sharp-eared fans will also remember the title as one of five exploitation films mentioned by John Travolta's sound man in Brian DePalma's BLOW OUT.) Let's hope lightning strikes twice.

Winter/Spring



### BALTO (Universal) December 22

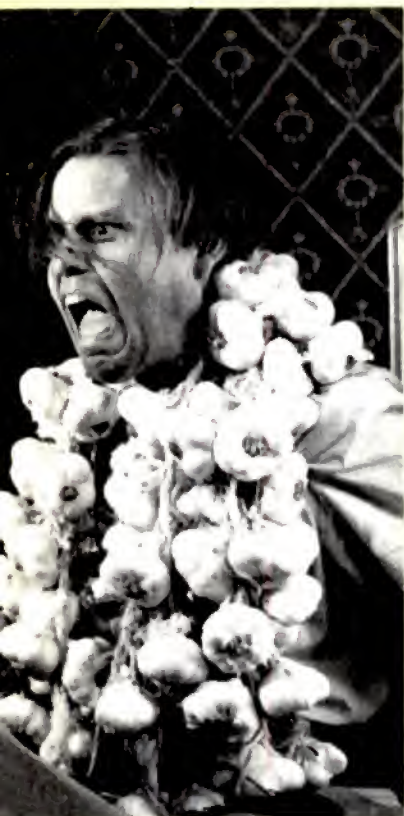
The Amblimation production seems an odd choice for animation, based as it is on a true story. However, that story is of a sled-dog who helped bring life-saving medicine to the town of Nome, Alaska, and the film is told from the dog's eye view. Kevin Bacon, Bob Hoskins, Bridget Fonda, and Phil Collins provide the voices for director Simon Wells. See Page 120

### CITY OF THE LOST CHILDREN (Triumph) December 22 (regional)

This latest effort from the DELICATESSEN directing duo of Jean-Pierre Jeunet and Marc Caro has earned positive advanced notice from *Daily Variety* ("A vibrant, bubbling cauldron of breathtaking special effects") and *Hollywood Reporter* ("An extravagant visual assemblage"). It's traveling the art house circuit, so the release date in your area may vary. See Page 116

### DRACULA: DEAD AND LOVING IT (Columbia) December 25

Mel Brooks tries to recapture past glories, hoping to do for Dracula what he did previously in YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN. The difference is that DRACULA: DEAD AND LOVING IT will not be a parody only of the B&W Bela Lugosi classic. Since the vampire count's popularity is still very much evident in recent films, Brooks will also take aim at more recent efforts. The over-inflated Coppola epic is taken to task for its ridiculously copious, pseudo-artistic blood-letting, and Hammer's HORROR OF DRACULA is represented by Lysette Anthony's look as Lucy, a dead ringer for Carol Marsh. Still, Leslie Nielsen's Dracula, Brooks's Van Helsing, and Peter MacNichol's Renfield (pictured) are clearly derived from the original film. See Page 8



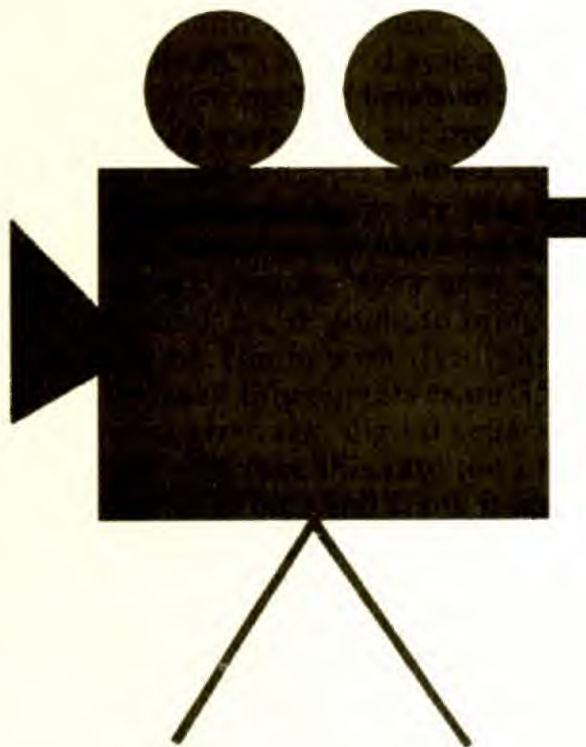
### FROM DUSK TILL DAWN (Dimension) February 2

As we went to press Miramax avoided a holiday blood-bath and switched their December 22 opening to February 2 for this team-up of writer-producer-star Quentin Tarentino and director Robert Rodriguez. According to Tarentino: "We're making a horror buff, drive-in movie, and we're not pulling back. We're not trying to find some happy middle ground that will make everybody and their cousin say, 'Oh, that's nice,' because we don't want to offend their sensibilities. Well, no! We're going out to offend sensibilities!" See Page 18 **Michael Beeler**

# RELEASE SCHEDULE

Upcoming cinefantastique at a glance, along with a word or two for the discriminating viewer.

compiled by Jay Stevenson  
(unless otherwise noted)



### JUMANJI (Tri-Star) December 15

Fantastic CGI unleashes African elephants and other wild animals into suburbia in this family fantasy about the eponymous magical board game. The screenwriters had to stretch the short children's story to feature-length. Whereas the book depicted only two children in the lead, the screenplay introduces a flashback explaining how a young Alan Parrish (played initially by Adam Hahn-Burd) could disappear into the game in 1969 and emerge as Robin Williams in 1995, thus providing the studio with a bankable adult star. Joe Johnston (HONEY, I SHRUNK THE KIDS) directs; Bonnie Hunt and Kirsten Dunst co-star. See Page 16 **Dan Persons**

### MARY REILLY (Tri-Star) February 2

This long-delayed release has been pushed back again. The original delay was supposedly to place the film in a more Oscar-friendly season, but abandoning that in favor of February lends credence to rumors that more time was needed for reshooting the ending—never a good sign. See CFQ 26:3

### SCREAMERS (Triumph) January 19

Peter Weller (ROBOCOP) and Jennifer Rubin star in this science-fiction thriller directed by Christian Duguay. Adapted by Dan O'Bannon from a story by Phillip K. Dick. Pushed back from a December release. SEE CFQ 27:2

### THE STUPIDS (Savoy) February 16

John Landis directed this film based on the series of children's books by author Harry Allard and artist James Marshal. Tom Arnold stars as Mr. Stupid, father of the dumbest family in America.

### THEODORE REX (New Line) mid-1996

Any film with a talking T-Rex must have something going for it. After agreeing to star, Whoopi Goldberg tried to walk away from this project, only to do an abrupt about-face back into the film in the aftermath of the BOXING HELENA court verdict against Kim Basinger (since overturned and settled out of court, ironically enough). After toying with a December 22 release date, New Line now plans to open the film in mid-to-late 1996. See Page 30

### 12 MONKEYS (Universal) December 27 (limited)

Advanced word has pegged director Terry Gilliam's film as one of the best of the year. Bruce Willis plays Cole, an unwilling volunteer from a post-apocalyptic future sent back to 1996 to find the source of a deadly virus. He meets psychiatrist Dr. Railly (Madeleine Stowe) who, alarmed by his prophetic warnings of the world's fate, believes him to be a madman. Questioning his own sanity, and pursued by authorities who see him as a dangerous lunatic, Cole attempts to unravel the mystery. His only clues are a haunting childhood memory and a series of cryptic symbols from a mysterious group, the Army of the 12 Monkeys. Written by Oscar nominee David Webb Peoples (UNFORGIVEN, BLADE RUNNER) and Janet Peoples. Goes wide in January. See Page 14

## OVERWEIGHT REMAKE

### THE NUTTY PROFESSOR (Universal)

Eddie Murphy follows A VAMPIRE IN BROOKLYN with this remake of Jerry Lewis' most well-loved film (even people who aren't French fondly recall seeing it as children). The question is whether there is any humor left to be milked out of a parody of the old Jekyll-Hyde scenario (certainly, DR. JEKYLL AND MS. HYDE would seem to suggest that the answer is a resounding no). Larry Gelbart (TOOTSIE) was paid \$1 million to rewrite the script by Barry Blaustein and David Sheffield, but the major innovation seems to be a 300-pound fat suit by Rick Baker. Tom Shadyac (ACE VENTURA: PET DETECTIVE) directed.

Winter/Spring



# HOLLYWOOD GOTHIC

## “THE CROW” FLIES AGAIN *Franchise survives star's death.*

by Steve Biodrowski

Each sequel presents its own problems, in terms of trying to live up to or surpass an original. But continuing THE CROW saga would seem to be a Quixotic task: not only is the lead character dead; so is the lead actor!

Still, producer Edward R. Pressman and distributor Miramax are convinced there is a franchise, so they put together a pre-production press conference with director Tim Pope, writer David Goyer, and set designer Alex McDowell, who will join forces to give us THE CROW 2: CITY OF ANGELS, starring European heartthrob Vincent Perez (QUEEN MARGOT).

“There is a different story to be told, and I knew that right from the beginning, or I wouldn't be sitting here now,” said director Pope. “I think what we're doing is going back more to the original purity of the graphic novel [by James O'Barr]. What interested me was the idea of really exploring the paradox of this character's existence and the idea of the crow. We took the idea and made it into a



An adult version of Sarah (played as a child by Rochelle Davis in the original) will be the only returning character in THE CROW 2: CITY OF ANGELS.

love story in the present tense; therefore, you can really explore the possibilities of who he is.”

Thankfully, the new film will leave Brandon Lee's Eric Draven in peace. Instead of reviving him, the sequel will re-create the premise from the original, updating the time frame to the future and selecting a new character to be resurrected by the Crow.

“What we suggest at the beginning of this movie,” continued Pope, “is that this has been happening all the way throughout history, so that there have been hundreds if not thousands of people

brought back before Eric Draven, and there will be more afterward. That person could be a man; that person could be a woman; that person could be a child. It could be any permutation.”

Essentially, this concept frees up the potential series to be an anthology, with each film featuring a different lead character. “Each film would be its own individual story,” added Pope, “and the unifying element would be the Crow and whatever supernatural force it is that brings these tortured souls back.”

Writer Goyer picked up the

continued on page 6

## Clive Barker, Darker Than Disney

by Denise Dumars

Coming next summer from the man who takes readers where they fear to go is...a cartoon? The film version of THE THIEF OF ALWAYS is, according to author Clive Barker, “an animated musical, but it's a lot darker than anything Disney's ever done.” The Paramount production is being directed by Robin Budd and produced by Frank Marshall and Kathleen Kennedy; besides adapting the script, Barker also serves as one of the film's four executive producers.

When asked why THIEF is being done in animation instead of live action, Barker replied, “We can actually press the scarier buttons a little bit harder in animation than we could have in live action. The horrible stuff in the house at the end [of the book]—all of that is pretty dark, and I just felt as though we would just lose so much of the narrative if we tried to do it live-action. I think it's every bit as dark as the book, on-screen. It's closer to the Disney of PINOCCHIO, which is a pretty dark Disney picture.”

Though the novel was aimed at young people, its readership ran the spectrum of age groups. “It's on the scholastic curriculum in some places, so it's being read by 6- through 13-year-olds. I think Paramount would like it to play a little younger. I feel it'll play very strongly to children. Children love scary stuff as long as the children in the narrative are dealing with it in a solid fashion. Harvey and Lulu are extremely brave kids, extremely focused on how to get what they need. And they defeat evil.”

Barker is delighted by the response the novel has received from young readers. “What's been a great pleasure to me is seeing how kids respond, getting letters from teachers, then wads of letters from kids. It surprises me how passionate kids are about the book. But it's wonderful. I'd like to think that it would be a book which would lead them to other pieces of Clive Barker, so at the age of thirteen or fourteen maybe they will pick up “The Hellbound Heart,” or WEAWEWORLD and then progress onto IMAJICA.” □

### Production Starts

#### ANASTASIA

After disappointing releases from Warner Brothers (THUMBELINA) and MGM (THE PEBBLE AND THE PENGUIN), producer-director Don Bluth and partner Gary Goldman now have a go at 20th Century Fox, with this animated historical epic featuring the fox of Meg Ryan.

#### THE CRUCIBLE

Arthur Miller's excellent historical play, which used the Salem witch trials as a metaphor for the McCarthy era, receives the all-star treatment under the direction of Nicholas Hytner: Daniel Day-Lewis, Winona Ryder, Paul Scofield, Bruce Davison, and Jeffrey Jones.

#### THE DEMOLITIONIST

KNB FX expert Robert Kurtzman (who wrote the original treatment for FROM DUSK TILL DAWN) makes his directorial debut with this low-budget effort.

continued on next page

## Short Notes

Despite an earlier report (CFQ 26:6:5), New Line's proposed FREDDY VS. JASON face-off flick does have a writer attached. In fact, Peter Biggs has already completed his screenplay; he got the assignment on the basis of his ALIEN VS. PREDATOR script. ☹ Police have apprehended independent contractor Fred Fulford, suspected of murdering low-budget horror director Al Adamson last summer (CFQ 27:3:6). ☹ Bruce Willis, fresh off his starring role in 12 MONKEYS, has signed to star in the futuristic science-fiction effort THE FIFTH ELEMENT for writer-director Luc Besson, who scored his first American success with THE PROFESSIONAL last year. ☹ Hammer rises from the grave, again: Jan DeBont (SPEED) and Alex Proyas (THE CROW) are among the directors signing on to helm remakes of classic Hammer horror films. Of course, Richard Donner failed to get his proposed series of remakes off the ground last year, but Hammer executive Roy Skeggs has a new financing deal in place with a London bank, which would allow him to coproduce the films with American studios. □

## Obituaries

by Mike Lyons & Jay Stevenson

### Phil Harris

One of animation's greatest voices has been silenced. Phil Harris, who initially gained popularity in the thirties as a sidekick on Jack Benny's radio show, passed away on August 11, at the age of 91. His throaty, jazz-club voice may not have seemed ideal for a Disney feature, but his career experienced a rejuvenation of sorts in 1967, when he provided the voice of Baloo the Bear in the studio's animated feature *THE JUNGLE BOOK*. The character was originally planned to be nothing more than a cameo, but Harris' initial reading so inspired the artists that they made the decision to bump Baloo up to supporting player. The singer's laid back style also helped shape the character's personality.

In *JUNGLE BOOK*, Harris performed an unforgettable scat duet with singer Louis Prima for "I Wanna Be Like You" and his rendition of the Oscar nominated "The Bear Necessities" helped make it one of the studio's most popular songs. Harris was so popular that his voice would become a staple at the studio for two more animated films, as O'Malley the alley cat in 1970's *THE ARISTOCATS* and as Little John, the bear, in *ROBIN HOOD* (1973).

### Production Starts

continued from page 5

#### KAZAAM

7-foot-one-inch basketball star Shaquille O'Neal, who made his acting debut in director William Friedkin's basketball drama *BLUE CHIPS*, plays a giant of a genie in his Disney-Interscope family film. *STARSKY AND HUTCH* star-turned-director Paul Michael Glaser (*THE RUNNING MAN*) helms the project, which he conceived, about an inner-city family brought together by the rappin' genie's magic.

#### SPACE TRUCKERS

Stuart Gordon's long-anticipated space epic went before the cameras in Ireland this fall. Scripted by Ted Man, the film stars Dennis Hopper, Debi Mazar (*BATMAN FOREVER*), George Wendt, and Barbara Crampton.

#### THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS

The classic children's book is brought to the screen by director Terry Jones (*ERIC THE VIKING*). Jones and former Monty Python pal Eric Idle star, along with Nicole Williamson (*EXCALIBUR*), for Buena Vista.

## HIGHLANDER IV

*Original scribe Gregory Widen tries to revive his immortal creations.*



HIGHLANDER III was way off course, but Widen may helm Part IV.

### Jeremy Brett

The 59-year-old actor died in September of heart failure. His varied career included roles in *THE MEDUSA TOUCH* (with Richard Burton) and a TV adaptation of *THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY*. But his greatest accomplishment was as Sherlock Holmes in the PBS *MYSTERY* series, which began in 1984. In keeping with Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's tales, the episodes were more mystery than horror, although occasionally they crossed the line, as in *THE SPECKLED BAND* and *THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES*. Brett's interpretation was the closest to the literary characterization, surpassing even the great Basil Rathbone. His last appearance as Holmes was filmed in 1993; he quit after collapsing of heart trouble.

### Harry Hurwitz

The independent filmmaker

died of heart failure on September 21. His credits include *SAFARI 300* (with David Carradine and Christopher Lee) and, under the pseudonym Harry Tapp, *NOCTURNA*, which featured John Carradine's last appearance as Count Dracula. But his place in genre history was truly earned by *THE PROJECTIONIST*, a 1971 cult film that received scant distribution but won the hearts of everyone who saw it. Using the meagerest of resources, stock footage, and an improvisational style, Hurwitz took us into the Walter Mitty-type existence of the title character, even inserting him into classic film footage a decade before Carl Reiner used a similar technique with Steve Martin in *DEAD MEN DON'T WEAR PLAID*. At the time of his death, Hurwitz was preparing *REMAKE*, with Johnny Depp, Peter Riegert, Carrie Fisher, Richard Lewis, and Susan Dey. Hurwitz was 57. □

## CROW 2: CITY OF ANGELS

continued from previous page/ thread, explaining, "There is a central heroic figure, the character of Ash [Perez]. I don't think Eric Draven was the Crow; I think Eric Draven was brought back by the Crow. So Ash is also brought back by the Crow. Also, Sarah in this film is an adult, and she is the only specific link in the movie, but it seemed appropriate. She was the witness and the narrator of the first film, and she's kind of the witness and the narrator in this film."

The original was a big success for an independent film but no blockbuster by studio standards. Still, Pope emphasized that, unlike the *Dark Knight*, there will be no attempt to broaden the sequel's appeal: "I'd say our movie is 'BATMAN with balls.' We do all the stuff they wouldn't dare do, that they wouldn't even dare think about." □

by Matthew F. Saunders

Following his impressive directorial debut with *THE PROPHECY*, probably the best horror film of the year, Gregory Widen is in talks with Miramax about helming a third *HIGHLANDER* sequel. Widen, of course, wrote the original draft of the first film but was not involved in the previous sequels ("although I get paid for them," he joked).

"They've asked me to get involved in the fourth one, and I may. I never wanted to earlier than that. I was always busy; there was always a reason why I didn't do it. That time has gone by, and I'm sort of interested in the idea. If the circumstances are right and the timing is right, I might get involved in the fourth one. We're still talking."

Of course, the first *HIGHLANDER* was a self-contained story, to which Widen had never imagined a sequel. "And after I heard what the second sequel was about, I figured, 'What's the point?' They had gone so far off the mark. So I had this feeling that the only reason I'd get involved in the fourth one, I think, is for a chance to put it back on track, remind everybody what it's supposed to be about. I mean, you can't just keep telling the same story over again. You've got to go somewhere else. So, we'll see."

"It's always been my hope to keep an eye on my characters after I created them," Widen continued, "but sometimes you don't have a choice—you're too busy, and other people own them, so you're stuck with their doing what they're going to do, and in the case of *HIGHLANDER* they blew it. But that's ultimately their call, because they own it, so I get involved when I can or when I have time, but frankly I didn't in the case of *HIGHLANDER*."

Widen has never seen the sequels, nor kept track of the series, although he admits the one episode he watched was pretty good. "If a studio owns the movie, they can make a sequel whether you care or not. I mean, Ron Howard really didn't want a sequel of *COCOON* made and wanted to have nothing to do with it. But he couldn't say no, and they made it anyway without him. I don't have the right to say no. It's just a question of whether I want to be involved in it or not." □



# INDEPENDENCE DAY

**T**hey're back! The flying saucer—star of countless '50s sci-fi flicks—returns in INDEPENDENCE

DAY. But, as conceived and executed by director Roland Emmerich and producer Dean Devlin (the team behind last year's surprise hit STARGATE), this is no exercise in nostalgia, no retro-recreation of well-remembered films from an earlier age. Instead, we will get a modern, high-tech assault of evil creatures out to destroy humanity as expeditiously as possible. And it all begins two days before the 4th of July.

During a press visit to the elaborate sets on the 20th Century Fox lot (including a full-size alien vehicle and a mock-up of purported UFO-home Area 51), Dean Devlin, who co-wrote the script with Emmerich, described the aliens as a devastating force, global in nature. "There were obvious [inspirations], like THE WAR OF THE WORLDS," he explained. "But the real kicker—what made Roland decide to do it—was actually the old Irwin Allen disaster movies; we're big fans of those films. As we talked about it, we thought, it's about an alien invasion, but not so much like 'Here's super-bad aliens and their master plan.' In our film, it's really like a force of nature; it's like the locusts have come. Our time is over."

If the film's creators are well-versed in science-fiction and disaster films, the ac-

## Aliens invade Earth, with '90s technology and a bigger budget.

### PREVIEW BY CHUCK WAGNER

tors' roles truly do homage to the ordinary-folks heroes seen in films past—from Bill Pullman's Clintonesque President, to Mary McDonnell's tough First Lady, to Jeff Goldblum's brilliant but odd scientists.

Although he is playing another scientist, Goldblum's role does represent a departure from the Cassandra-like Ian Malcolm in JURASSIC PARK—one in which he makes a critical difference in the struggle against the aliens. "My gosh, what would it be like if that [alien invasion] actually happened?" Goldblum asked rhetorically, during a break between scenes. "It's great how with something awful—death and loss and threats—people come together and come up with the best stuff in themselves. The spirit of service, contribution, feeling for the human race. I like that—how the principles emerge in the characters once disaster strikes. They get full of personal responsibility and vision for a world that survives. I like my character, and his involvement in

the real, creative process of negotiation and problem-solving in this challenging circumstance."

The aliens function nicely as an enemy the audience can love to hate; because they aren't human, no special interest group will mind if viewers cheer as they are destroyed. While acknowledging the difficulty of cre-

ating movie villains these days "without insulting someone," Devlin points out, "That's not the point of our movie. Really, the point was born from the riots, fires, and earthquakes, when people with incredible differences came together in a time of crisis. A lot of people fantasize: if there was an outside enemy coming to this world, wouldn't we all forget our petty differences and remember what we have in common?"

The premise is reminiscent of the OUTER LIMITS episode "The Architects of Fear," in which a group of scientists create an artificial alien menace to frighten the world into unifying. Although unfamiliar with the episode, Devlin commented that his film will be playing to a different set of fears than those that plagued audiences of earlier alien invasion scenarios. "I think when WAR OF THE WORLDS was made, it was playing upon our fear of invasion," he said. "I don't think our emphasis is that. I think what this movie is really playing upon is our fears for the global environment as we near the millennium and the possibility of the end of the world." □

Top of page: A team of soldiers surveys the results of an alien attack in Fox's INDEPENDENCE DAY.

# Dracula Dead and Loving It

**Mel Brooks has fun with the clichés of the vampire genre.**

*By Chuck Wagner*

In 1975 Mel Brooks took something old, something new, something borrowed and something—black and white—and fashioned *YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN* into a classic parody.

Now, 20 years later, he again takes something old, something new, something borrowed and something—red—for *DRACULA: DEAD AND LOVING IT*. Brooks takes the old legends of vampires, the latest special effects technologies, the Stoker novel and its many movie forms, and gory color to tell the tale—while staying true to original source material as was *YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN*—Sony Pictures opens the film nationwide for Christmas, competing with Quentin Tarantino's Miramax horror comedy *FROM DUSK TO DAWN*.

As Steve Haberman (with Rudy De Luca and Mel Brooks the cowriter of the film) put it, "Our movie tells again the original story of Dracula, but borrows from favorite scenes of Tod Browning's version, the Hammer films, Murnau's *NOSFERATU*, and, of course, the Coppola film. Mixing and



Brooks plays Dr. Van Helsing, "the one who knows something is wrong," and directs in the tradition of *YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN*.

matching the scenes, we basically tell the story of *DRACULA*. Dracula is a perfect foil for comedy: top hat, cape, elegant clothes. Yet he falls and sustains damage, but—being undead—isn't hurt."

Haberman evoked memories of movies past, such as the Laurel and Hardy films and Harold Lloyd. In those films, we laugh at the antics and pratfalls, but we feel some sympathy for the

poor humans who play the role. After all, it looks like they're being hurt. But Dracula can't be hurt by normal accidents. So wild and infinite pratfalls can occur. Along with all the man-to-bat transformations that modern morphing can supply, Brooks' movie promises real suspense—and even some gore. But all of it with the latent portent of humor.

The late horror author and *PSYCHO* creator Robert Bloch once said that horror and humor were two sides to the same coin. *YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN* showed this in parts—*DRACULA: DEAD AND LOVING IT* embraces this theory wholeheartedly. Recall the now-famous Dan Ackroyd/Julia Child routine from *SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE*? Dan/Julia nicks her finger in the kitchen—only to succumb to a steady hose-stream of blood. The scene inspires titters, guffaws, shock, horror—and even sickens—all in the span of moments. This is the humor of horror carried into the ridiculous.

*DRACULA: DEAD AND LOVING IT* goes further. Mel Brooks himself delivered the following promise: "At one point a veritable Lincoln Center

Fountain of blood will appear. Never ending, never stopping."

But the movie isn't just funny. As in *YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN*, genuine atmosphere and fright will be provided in strong doses. Computerized mattes and effects are employed to achieve desired effects. Yet, Brooks confided that the whole film will cost "around \$25-28 million." So this will be no "*BLOOD-WORLD*" of red ink.

Unlike the Eddie Murphy film, *VAMPIRE IN BROOKLYN*, which takes place in modern times, *DRACULA: DEAD AND LOVING IT* is set in the time of the Stoker novel: 1893. Victoria reigns on the throne of England. The style is of that time, and adds to the atmosphere. All the humor is derived from character and situation as well. Traditional ethnic humor—played so beautifully in *BLAZING SADDLES*, among other Mel Brooks movies—will not be in evidence here.

"We try to keep the atmosphere scary in this movie," said Haberman. "We're using actual, Gothic trappings to make the film seem authentic, frightening, atmospheric, and in period. We're seriously telling the story, and then suddenly the se-



Leslie Nielsen plays Dracula.





Putting the bite on Amy Yasbeck as Mina, opening December 22 from Sony.

rious part becomes a straight line for the comedy. We've carefully constructed almost every scene of the movie. We don't do any anachronisms and we don't do any camera jokes. We don't call attention to the fact we're making a movie. We never try to tear the fabric of the reality that we've set up telling DRACULA. We never let the 'fourth wall' be broken."

That wall was purposely rammed in Mel Brooks' famous ending of BLAZING SADDLES—where the cowboy/bad guy chase literally spills off the set and into working Hollywood. But here—as in YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN—the story is in charge. The characters never step away from their duty of remaining faithful to the story.

Nowhere will this be better demonstrated than in Mel Brooks' own performance as Dr. Abraham (the character's real first name) Van Helsing. The humor is in the situation, with no winking at the audience. Brooks described his role as that of the expected, serious vampire hunter. "I based my performance on Edward van Sloane, the Van Helsing from the 1931 movie," said Brooks.

The Count himself is played by Leslie Nielsen, the king of deadpan. As the Lord of the Undead, the star of the POLICE SQUAD! TV series and NAKED GUN movie series swaps his trench coat for the Count's tails to become Brooks' vampiric foil. It's an opportunity for Nielsen to unleash heretofore unseen Balkan mannerisms from under his Canadian-born exterior.

In a real casting coup, Peter MacNicol plays Count Dracula's grovelling, bug-eating slave, Renfield.

MacNicol seems an ideal choice for the part after his scene-stealing turn in GHOST-BUSTERS II. There, as the

Steve Weber as Harker stakes Lucy, tutored from a safe and dry distance by Brooks. Steve Haberman co-wrote the script with Brooks and Rudy DeLuca.



foppish, affected museum curator he also played henchman to another Balkan potentate—Vigo, scourge of Carpathia.

As Mina Seward, Amy Yasbeck (who played Maid Marian in ROBIN HOOD: MEN IN TIGHTS) plays the definitive Victorian gentlewoman: beautiful, yet chaste; pampered, yet undersexed.

Jonathan Harker—discreet, reserved...and repressed—is played by Steven Weber, currently starring on TV as Brian Hackett, the quick-witted pilot on the hit NBC-TV comedy series WINGS.

In another delicious casting coup, the role of Lucy Westerna is played by British beauty Lysette Anthony. In her, we have the other side of the Victorian tracks. A fun-loving, vampish girl at the beginning of the story, she becomes a full-blooded vampire sexpot under the draining tutelage of the Count. All those who remember Anthony in the evil (and wonderfully camp) role of Angelique on the TV-remake of DARK SHADOWS will know that she is more than equal to the task of filling the corset of Lucy Westerna.

There is one other interesting point about Anthony. While the DRACULA writers, cast and Brooks himself are avid movie fans, Anthony doesn't much enjoy movies—especially scary ones. It's possible she will never see DRACULA: DEAD AND LOVING IT in its finished form.

Rounding out the principal-cast is veteran Mel Brooks player Harvey Korman as Dr. Seward, in charge of the mental hospital which houses the de-



Lysette Anthony as Lucy goes from vamp to vampire, aping HORROR OF DRACULA.

monized Renfield. (This is Korman's second round in a Brooks-directed mental home—recall his psychiatrist role in Brooks' HIGH ANXIETY.) Korman's Dr. Seward is none-too-quick on the uptake, reminiscent of Nigel Bruce's turns as Dr. Watson in the old Sherlock Holmes series.

Also appearing in DRACULA: DEAD AND LOVING IT are Mark Blankfield (Blinken in ROBIN HOOD: MEN IN TIGHTS), Megan Cavanagh (Broomhilde in Brooks' ROBIN HOOD), Clive Revill, Chuck McCann, Leslie Sachs, Avery Schreiber, Darla Haun, Karen Roe, Matthew Porretta (Will Scarlett in MEN IN TIGHTS) and Jennifer Crystal.

"Hysterical," Brooks promises. "But bring a Band-Aid or cotton swabs. Lots of them."

Note: As bloody as DRACULA: DEAD AND LOVING IT might be, it is not the last sanguinary trip for this team of creators. Mel Brooks and Brooksfilms' next film will be in the straight horror vein. Also written by Steve Haberman and Rudy De Luca, Brooks offers the following assurance: "It's my most gruesome yet." And remember, Brooksfilms produced THE FLY. The title of this film: NOT HUMAN. Look for it in late 1996/ 1997. □

# LAW

## Matt Frewer

*By Todd French*

JOBE'S WAR, the sequel to Brett Leonard's 1992 VR thriller, **LAWNMOWER MAN**, is slated by its New Line Cinema distributors for a January release. *CFQ* buffs and discriminating filmgoers, however, are sure to notice one distinct cast omission: would-be Cyber-god Jeff Fahey, the original Jobe, has turned in his ticket to the VR dome, as actor Matt Frewer reprises the character of the simpleton turned computer-powered Nietzschean antihero headed for a deadly interface with an unsuspecting world.

Frewer (**HONEY, I SHRUNK THE KIDS, FAR FROM HOME, MAX HEADROOM**) laughed. "We sort of fudged the change from Jeff Fahey to me. At the start of the film, after I'm found in the rubble, there's a quick reference to plastic surgery. When they haul me out of the lab, one of the first things I demand changed is my face!"

Produced by Allied Films and distributed by New Line, the film wrapped its Los Angeles shooting schedule on Christmas Eve 1994 under new helmer, Farhad Mann (**MAX HEADROOM**), who replaced the first film's director, Brett Leonard. Starring Frewer, Kevin Conway, Ely Puget and Patrick Bergman, the movie's executive producer is Ed Simone. Besides the absence of Fahey and original director Leonard, the first film's co-lead Pierce Brosnan will not be reprising his role as Dr. Lawrence Angelo. Xaos and Angel Studios, the FX houses that handled the effects for the first film, will not be doing the chores this time around.

For those *CFQ* readers who do not remember the first **LAWNMOWER MAN**, which only had a passing fancy to the identically titled Stephen King tale of a Pan-worshipping gardener who mows lawns via magic, that film was a mixture of genre antecedents ranging from "Flowers for Algernon" to **FRANKENSTEIN** and **TRON**. Combining such information age crazes as artificial intelligence, designer drugs, computer viruses and cybersex (also called "teledildonics"), Leonard's story concerned Jobe Smith (Fahey), a childlike naif introduced to the world of VR by Dr. Lawrence Angelo (Pierce Brosnan), working for the sinister Cybertech research facility. Boosting the innocent's I.Q. with designer drugs



Frewer as Jobe in **LAWNMOWER MAN 2**, now subtitled **BEYOND CYBERSPACE** instead of **JOBE'S WAR**. Right: Jeff Fahey in the role in the original 1992 film, computer graphics by Angel Studios, neither of which are returning on the new sequel. Frewer, who played **MAX HEADROOM**, is reunited with **MAX HEADROOM** movie helmer Farhad Mann.



# LAWNMOWER MAN 2

## on playing the Messiah of Virtual Reality.

and interactive VR technology, the good doctor soon came to rue his experiment when the gentle, put upon Jobe turned into a TRON-fitted Cyber-Avenger, ready to eliminate his creator and subjugate mankind by tapping into the global electronics network. In the film's climax, a lab explosion appears to put an end to the computer-generated monster. But not-so-fast...

Said Frewer, who is reunited with MAX HEADROOM director Mann, "The premise is that this one takes up where the first one left off. At the very beginning of the movie, there's an explosion at The Virtual Reality Institute, and Jobe [Frewer], crippled by the blast, is the sole survivor. At this point, he's lost his legs and one arm. He's found by the head of VRI, Jonathan Walker [Kevin Conway], a very unscrupulous guy who exploits his powers. Walker plugs Jobe into these computers, and instructs him to build this huge VR city, allowing Jobe to tap into this ocean of information which ebbs and flows. This ultimately enables Walker to control the world's banking system."

As Jobe toils for the despicable Walker, himself falling in love with VRI technician Corie Platt (Ely Puget), "He has this romance with her in his mind," Frewer opined. When she resists his attentions in favor of Dr. Benjamin Trace (Patrick Bergen) "The Father of Virtual Reality" who's convinced that the one-time gardener is an unstable vessel for VR might, spurned suitor Jobe is set-off on a megalomaniacal binge. When Jobe throws off Walker's yoke, to become a naziish Cyber-Messiah by liquidating the world's credit, Trace finds himself forced to face down the Web-era Hitler.

Frewer, who visited several paraplegic hospitals in Toronto in preparation for taking on the lead, hopes that by the time the film makes the final edit, the ambivalence inherent in the part will cross over to the big screen. Said Frewer, "When he starts off he's this crumpled bag of humanity. Farhad Mann, the director, and myself, really worked hard to design a character whom you don't know how to feel about. He starts off as this simpleton, then turns into this spirited, puckish character, then evolves into a kind of Hitler figure. There's a terrific



Frewer as Jobe, a cripple from the blast which ended the original film, exhorts his followers from his massive VR dome. New Line opens the new sequel early in January.

scene where he's preaching to his followers in a massive VR dome, and he's exhorting them to give up their material possessions and throw them at his feet. Earlier, when Corie pities him, he misreads that pity for romantic interest, and so he veers off in a very bitter way: an element of the movie I hope they contain. You understand why Jobe does what he does, it humanizes the character. Without that element, he is in danger of becoming a one-dimensional villain character, or worse, a freakshow."

Frewer added, "I think the movie Farhad's made is actually a far better film than the first LAWMOWER MAN. We've had VR, VR5, WILD PALMS, and I think the audience is definitely up to stuff on VR. I also think that the VR effects in JOBE'S WAR are superior to the effects in the first movie: more four-dimensional, different than the simplistic, cube-look in LAWMOWER MAN. I fret that the

movie's tone is going to be changed to cater to a younger audience and I feel kids are sophisticated enough to deal with a little ambiguity and stick with it to the end. I'm very concerned that the complexity of the story is going to be stripped away. There's a lot of humor and romance in the rough cut; Farhad let me do a great deal of neat improvisation."

Frewer, who's played among other things, Drew Barrymore's dad in FAR FROM HOME, Rick Moranis' neighbor in HONEY, I SHRUNK THE KIDS, and starred in THE TAKING OF BEVERLY HILLS, was elated to find himself paired once again with Farhad Mann, the director of MAX HEADROOM: THE ORIGINAL STORY the movie based on the '80s British Channel-4 computer-generated character. Frewer was lavish in his praise for the helmer who made the actor's extensive thesping commitments for the film's innumerable blue-screen FX add-ons, a creative challenge. Frewer guessed the post-production effects took a month.

Said Frewer, "Farhad and I go way back; we worked together on the MAX HEADROOM movie, which he directed. He's terrific and really wonderful with actors, having an acting background himself. He's made [JOBE'S WAR], a \$15 million production, look like a \$45 million one, and he waltzed me through every step and helped me pitch my performance, which is saying a lot when you're dealing with a great amount of blue-screen effects, and you don't know what to suggest. He'd stand there and say, 'Okay, pretend you're about to be devoured by the biggest T-Rex on the planet.' Farhad started off in commercials and he's very visual as well as great with actors, which is a nice combination to have—a director who can paint such a wonderful canvas for you as an actor to exist on. He gave himself to this movie for over three years."

On the strength of the rough cut's visuals, Frewer noted, "There's some amazing stuff. I saw a rough cut about 3 1/2 months ago. The construction of the VR city is phenomenal. There's a great shot that starts out tight on Jobe, then pulls back and wraps around and begins pulling back out of the VR dome, and it's a knockout." □

# COMING

By Dan Persons

Let's call this the "shot-in-the-arm" edition of CA, seeing as it will focus on those adventurous souls who, if they have their way, might just succeed in injecting a bit of life's blood into the veins of an otherwise moribund film industry. Big doings are indeed afoot in Hollywood, and, mercifully, none of them involve Kevin Costner racing to the rescue on a jet-ski.

## POCKET-CHANGE REVOLUTIONARIES

Being "at liberty" can occasionally do wonders for one's outlook. Take David March Douglas, a digital artist over at Sony who suddenly found himself out of a job when carpal tunnel syndrome deprived him of his ability to draw. Gathering together a handful of friends and working up a short script, he wangled some equipment and studio time, and in the process came up with a film that's prompted the hottest buzz in town since Quentin Tarantino detonated his first blood squib.

...FOR THE CAUSE is a 20-minute dollop of science fiction action-adventure, centering around a group of revolutionaries whose goal is to blow up a futuristic arcology. Trapped in the dome by armed security forces, the soldiers must stave off their attackers while at the same time deactivating their backpack-sized nuclear device, whose own sentient, virtual-reality-enhanced safeguards begin to fight back in myriad, nasty ways. Said Douglas when we were able to pin him down between endless rounds of screenings, "We didn't want to get involved with flashbacks, voice narration, any of the normal cheats. It's a simple film; what we are attempting to show with this film is a tense, action sequence. It's more like a slice out of a modern, action-adventure film."

At the very least, Douglas—who has teamed-up with Digital Domain producer Kia Jam, director of photography Chris Holt, and visual effects supervisor/brother Tim Douglas to form the rather fittingly named Grand Design film company—has started netting some renown as a master of barter. Armed with nothing but an animatic-style, Hi-8 video-



tape dry-run filmed in his living room, the director was able to convince an L.A. equipment house to supply a 35mm camera and anamorphic lenses. By slipping into the Sony studio over the '94 Labor Day weekend, he was able to shoot enough high-power footage to win himself access to the facilities for an additional eight weekends, stretched over six months. Jam's connections at DigiDom netted the project some effects work; additional effects ranged all the way from in-camera interactive lighting to digital work prepared on both PC's and SGI systems.

The effort has paid off handsomely. The film has been unspooled for practically every studio and producer in town, culminating with a screening for the Man himself, James Cameron. "When people first see it," said Douglas, "they hear 'short film' and think we're going to bring 'em something on 16mm with flat lighting. We've finished this ourselves on 35mm stock with a six-track, digital separation soundtrack. We take this into the Lightstorm screening room and crank it up and it's great. We even got a 70-piece choir to do the music."

Where it goes from here, Douglas isn't ready to say. While...FOR THE CAUSE may finally be spun-off into a CD-ROM game or released on video, its real purpose—to get the offers rolling in—has already been achieved. "We want to make smaller, tighter-budgeted films," Douglas explained. "We want to make films for \$8 to \$10 million that look like they're \$30 million films. This film shows that we can do that. The important thing is: we need to be logical about this. We need to tell a good story for \$8 million, then we need to tell a good story for about \$16 million. For us to take on a \$75 million or \$40 million thing right now...I don't think it's as good

a demonstration of what we're capable of. I'd rather have an \$8 million film that makes \$40 million, than a \$40 million film that does the same business."

## ROCKING THE BOAT (OR PLANE, OR HOVERCRAFT, OR STARSHIP, OR...)

Trey Stokes has been garnering more than a little attention himself. Founder, along with artist Maija Beeton, of the L.A. design and consulting boutique the Truly Dangerous Company, his page on the web has recently been drawing both praise and brickbats for its searingly detailed indictment of the Fox Network's bogus ALIEN AUTOPSY special (net-surfers can check it out at <http://www.trudang.com/trudang/>). On the more earthbound side, the former puppeteer, who over the past eight years has branched out into both animatronics and CGI with work on such productions as THE BLOB, THE ABYSS, ROBOCOP II and SPECIES, has recently extended his career profile again, applying his puppeteering and computer skills to the still nascent field of motion simulators.

Having cut his teeth on one of the first major motion simulator rides, Universal Studio's THE FUNTASTIC WORLD OF HANNA-BARBERA (for which he contributed to the film's computer-generated backgrounds), Stokes has become a genuine globe-trotter, his peripatetic calling taking him to such disparate locales as Las Vegas' MGM Grand Adventures, South Korea's Expo '93, and Tokyo's San Rio Puroland (home of MONSTER PLANET GODZILLA, which Stokes concisely describes as "Godzilla meets Hello Kitty"). Of the recent genesis of this unique art form, Stokes says, "It's not that the technology is getting better in what the audience feels, but the technology to deliver

that sensation is becoming more and more cost-effective. That's why you're seeing more and more of them. They're becoming much more accessible to people with smaller budgets, as opposed to being just the domain of a Disney or a Universal Studios. As far as the control systems and the methods of programming, that hasn't gotten measurably more sophisticated. It's still not exactly what you'd call a huge job-market, so there aren't many people out there developing easy, wonderful software to program ride simulators with. It's still a very

DAVINCI'S ANGEL, a simulator ride of human flight. Inset: Maija Beeton and Trey Stokes, rethinking rides in filmic terms.



# ATTRACTIONS

labor-intensive, time-consuming, trial-and-errorish sort of method.”

The company has recently finished up programming THE LEGEND RIVER for the Mall of America in Minneapolis, and is embarking on an ambitious project for LEGEND's producer, Tempus Entertainment: DAVINCI'S ANGEL. A simulator ride based on Leonardo DaVinci's concept of a human-powered flying machine, Stokes and Beeton intend to use the project to launch Truly Dangerous' transformation into a serious, ride-film production studio, offering everything from script development and concept art, all the way through to production and program-

ming. A unique blend of Renaissance charm and high-tech effects, DAVINCI'S ANGEL will also serve, Stokes hopes, as something of a mold-breaker in the growing library of ride-films: “One of the areas the Truly Dangerous

Company is hoping to go into is that, having seen so many ride-films and having to program so many ride-films, we think that there's a lot of interesting things in the genre that haven't been attempted. From day one there have been rules about flight simulator films that I happen to think aren't actually rules at all. Two that come to mind immediately: the continuous point-of-view [the restriction of a film to a single, real-time point-of-view], the other is that the films have to be ultra-realistic and fabulously expensive. The audience knows it's not going anywhere; we're not fooling anyone with this. If we all know it's not real, why spend \$50 million to make it look so darn real?

“We're sort of in the kinescope stage of motion simulators. When films were originally made, there was an argument that you couldn't cut between shots because people would be confused, you would disorient them. That wasn't true, either. We're at the same place with motion simulators. I don't think that that's how it has to be.”

**MOROSE MORROW  
ANKLES MOREAU  
(Hey, just like *Variety*!)**

New Line's THE ISLAND OF DOCTOR MOREAU keeps shedding principals. Previously, we told you how the production lost its director, Richard Stanley, after



BATMAN IV, Val Kilmer (above) returns, pitted against (tentative) Patrick Stewart (l) as Mr. Freeze and Demi Moore as Poison Ivy.



only three days of shooting (THE MANCHURIAN CANDIDATE's John Frankenheimer has stepped in to replace him). Now Rob Morrow has bowed out of the Australia-based production. While the studio said the departure was amicable, the reason given—that the actor walked after Frankenheimer, stars Marlon Brando and Val Kilmer, and scripter Walon Green made changes to the screenplay—somehow conjures an image of stars and staff hovering menacingly over a helpless script, while Morrow stands off to the side, going, “Aw, c'mon guys. Can't I play too?” David Thewlis, who garnered praise for his vitriolic performance in Mike Leigh's NAKED, and who will be seen soon in Universal's DRAGONHEART, will take Morrow's place.

The project is getting back on track, if perhaps fitfully. “I only know what I'm reading in the columns,” admitted co-star Ron Perlman. “I'm here. I should've been there August 14th; it's now August 24th and I'm still not there. I'm leaving Monday night to go there. All I'd heard was that they'd taken a look at some of the first day's dailies and decided to make a change.

“I'm speculating, but it sounds like everybody's happy. It sounds like what they need on this thing is somebody who can go over there and cut through the bull-

shit and get this thing up and going again. When you think about a John Frankenheimer, who's been everywhere and seen everything and done everything, I have nothing but confidence that he's the right man for the job. I'm going over there with nothing but good faith that it's going to be cool.”

## TRAILERS

We're fast running out of space, so let's see if we can keep it short 'n' snappy...Hollywood's got a bad case of dueling yetis. Abominable snowman pics already in production include Full Moon's THE PRIMEVALS and Noonday Sun's WEST OF KASHMIR.

In the works, and coping first and second place trophies for Minimalist Titles of the Year, are Jean-Claude Van Damme's, ABOMINABLE, and Ilya Salkind's THE ABOMINABLE SNOWMAN.

The Salkinds, of course, are famous for dragging Marlon Brando into whatever project they're engaged in. Considering the context, though, the less said about the matter, the better...CBS, hungry for any audience, is going after the STAR TREK crowd with THE OSIRIS CHRONICLES. The series, by *The Alienist* author Caleb Carr, envisions what the universe will be like once a Federation-like alliance bites the big one. The pilot may air in March... They're already talking X-FILES feature, but Chris Carter is too busy getting the series out, and David Duchovny—quite sensibly—would rather his first, big feature role not be a character fans have seen week-in and week-out...

BATMAN IV. Lens: '96. Debut: Summer '97. Returning: Schumacher, Kilmer, O'Donnell. New (still tentative): Patrick Stewart (Mr. Freeze), Demi Moore (Poison Ivy). You fill in the blanks...Sony/Philips and Time/Warner/Toshiba have agreed to jointly develop a digital video disc (DVD) system. The five-inch platters—offering full-screen video and massive data storage—won't instantly spell doom for VHS, laser disks, and CD-ROMs, but many think it's only a matter of time...While we're talking Internet, come visit me at my own website:<http://users.aol.com/DanPersons/danpage1.html> (Yeah, and some of us can't afford our own servers. Do please forgive me). □

# TWELVE MONKEYS

By Paul Wardle and Steve Biodrowski

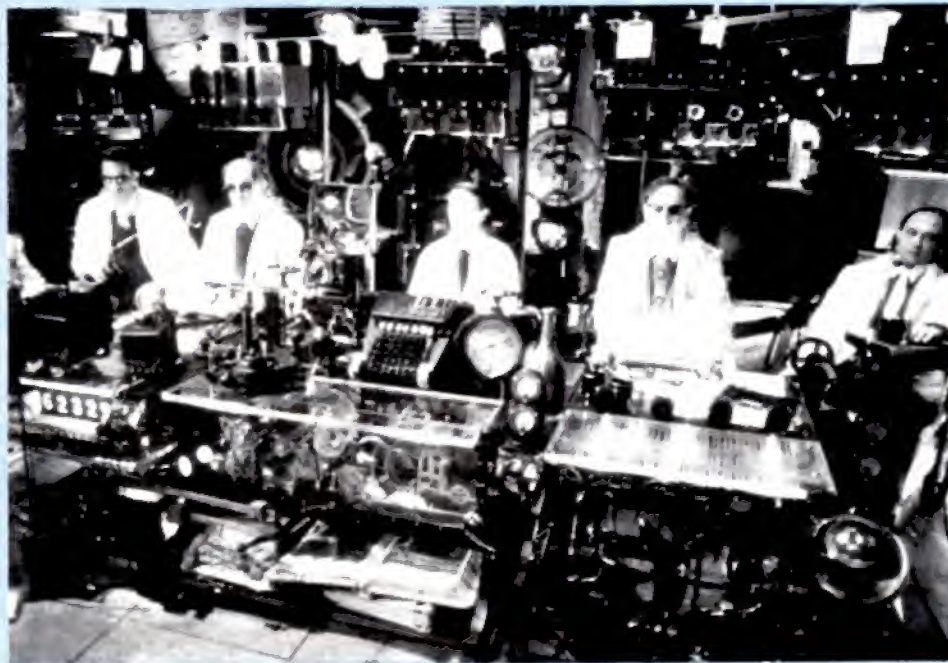
TWELVE MONKEYS may star current Hollywood heavyweights Bruce Willis and Brad Pitt (not to mention Madeline Stowe and Christopher Plummer), but don't expect a big-budget blockbuster along the lines of DIE HARD or INTERVIEW WITH THE VAMPIRE. Universal opens the film December 27.

The film's inspiration comes from the 29-minute B&W science fiction film LA JETEE (1962). That film's director, Chris Marker, was a former editor for French director Alain Resnais, whose work was renowned for playing havoc with conventional narrative and time structures. Some of this ambiguity rubbed off in Marker's directorial effort; in fact, the method of time travel, which involved focusing on a strong memory while being injected with drugs, suggested a hallucinatory subjective experience, rather than a literal trip through time.

That ambiguity, retained in the TWELVE MONKEYS screenplay by David Webb Peoples and Janet Peoples, was a major attraction to director Terry Gilliam, whose previous work—including TIME BANDITS, THE ADVENTURES OF BARON MUNCHAUSEN, and THE FISHER KING—often cross the line between fantasy and reality. Gilliam has been so careful to preserve the uncertainty of what's happening to the film's protagonist that, shortly after wrapping production, he claimed not to know what the film was about.

"That's the trouble," he joked. "Until we see it, I really don't know what it's going to be like. I know the bits and pieces are all good, but it's how they all string together. Basically, we've got a guy [Willis] who

## Terry Gilliam helms all-star time-travel science fiction epic.



In Gilliam's retro-future 2035, Bruce Willis is sent back in time to 1996 by a team of scientists to prevent a plague that has wiped out 99% of humanity.

may have come back from the future to find a virus before it mutates. This virus wiped out the planet in 1996, and the few survivors went underground and eventually made a life for themselves. The question then becomes whether this character is mad, or else it's true, and then there's a psychiatrist he kidnaps [Stowe], who keeps trying to convince him it's all in his mind."

The use of a virus, as opposed to the original short's nuclear holocaust, is as close as the new film comes to being trendy, following OUTBREAK and the non-fiction book *The Hot Zone*. Even the inclusion of the word

"monkey" in the title seems to suggest current, highly publicized fears that African primates could spread devastating new untreatable diseases to humanity.

"It all managed to match very nicely," said Gilliam of the coincidence. "I think all the big virus stuff is part of a Universal marketing strategy: they have infected people out there so it will be advertising for the film."

It is surprising to hear Gilliam joke so affably about the Universal brass; after all, this is the studio that tried to force him to recut BRAZIL in the 1980s. "Yeah," admitted Gilliam, "but it gets more ironic, because the

producer [Charles Roven] is married to Dawn Steele, who was at Columbia when we did MUNCHAUSEN." That production debacle unfairly gave Gilliam a reputation in Hollywood as an irresponsible spender, but, he added, "Studio heads change. The guy who's now president [of Universal], Casey Silver, is a big fan. He did a very brave thing, letting the beast back into the enclosure."

Gilliam may be back, but technically TWELVE MONKEYS is not a studio production; rather, it was shot independently, and in order to pre-sell Universal on distributing it to theatres, star names were necessary. "Those were not my first choices," Gilliam admitted of the casting of Willis and Pitt. "I kept walking away from the film, because I thought it wasn't going to go anywhere. For a while, it didn't look like it was going to get made. The producer was tenacious, and he just wouldn't let go. It reached a point where the studio was pushing for a star, because they think it's an art movie. They're desperate to have a big name in it, and Bruce's name came up. I thought it was a possibility, because I met him on FISHER KING, and I quite liked him. He's a better actor than he seems on screen."

Of fans who might think that Gilliam has compromised himself by accepting the star casting, the director responded, "They don't understand the perverseness. That's the great thing. That's also a reason to do it, it seems to me. If all the fans think I shouldn't be doing it, well fuck 'em! This is exactly what I should be doing. Constantly shifting perception is really important to me."

Also appealing was the opportunity to "reinvent people's perceptions of who Bruce and

Brad are. That's what intrigues me, because they're playing parts that are the opposite of anything they've ever played before. The ultimate trigger on this was that it had been four years since I'd been behind a camera. FISHER KING was finished in 1990, and I was getting twitchy, because the projects I had been working on were going nowhere, for a variety of reasons. I was getting more and more depressed, and I just wanted to do something. This was a script I really liked because it's very complicated.

"It's not a Hollywood movie by any standards. Bruce is keen to change his career, because the action stuff is a real dead end. In the last few years, you've seen him turning up in lots of little parts, playing a variety of character roles. Brad was begging to do it, and I wasn't so sure whether I wanted him. In the end, his enthusiasm won me over. I'm a sucker for that, getting someone like Brad to do something way beyond anything he's done before. If someone really wants to do it, and shows a lot of enthusiasm, I'll gamble on it.

"Bruce is one of those guys who became a star very quickly," Gilliam continued. "He leapt from television to film, and—bingo!—he was trapped. Brad, on the other hand, was not yet 'the sexiest man in America' when we signed him on. The studio couldn't believe their luck!"

TWELVE MONKEYS contains much of the production design and visual inventiveness one has come to expect from a Terry Gilliam film, yet it utilized extensive location shooting in Philadelphia and Baltimore. "One of the big problems was, since we were shooting in the winter, we had to decide whether we should go with or without snow, because there were a lot of exteriors, and you've got to make a choice. I decided that whatever the ground looked like on the first weekend of shooting, we'd go with that. There was this beautiful snow, and I decided we'd go with snow; of course, that was the last time it snowed."

As in a Monty Python



Filming on the streets of Baltimore, Willis plays a violent sociopathic convict, befriended by psychiatrist Madeline Stowe. Inset: Gilliam.

sketch, this necessitated the use of fake snow; however, unlike the sketch, Gilliam will not go so far as to state that, on screen, the fake snow looks more like snow than real snow. "No, it's not as good as I wanted it," he said. "There was a lot of stuff that was very frustrating: it was a club-footed crew, limping along—a mixture of good people and lame people.

"This wasn't the problem on MUNCHAUSEN. I had good people, but there were English and Italians, who didn't get along. The Italians were brilliant! The production was appalling. We had a brilliant but very slow lighting cameraman, Peppino [Giuseppe] Rotunno. He could only work at his pace. I almost left. At one point, I

said, 'It's him or me,' but firing him is like firing the godfather—you can't do that. You get into these situations and they're not simple things. You have to cast and crew the film carefully. If you don't, you pay the price."

Gilliam followed MUNCHAUSEN with THE FISHER KING, his first film from a script written by someone else (Richard LeGravanes). Although less visually elaborate than his previous work, the attention to characterization and performance showed that he could meld his vision with more conventional dramatic structure—a strength which served him well on TWELVE MONKEYS. The production also served to remind Hollywood that Gilliam could direct a film

on schedule and on budget. "One of the reasons for doing FISHER KING after MUNCHAUSEN was to show everybody I was responsible. We went into it without final cut, putting up my fee as the completion guarantor. I had to do it again on this one, because the insurance company wanted a ridiculous percentage as a contingency. They said this was because all my films go over budget. Only one film went over budget, and the next film after that was on budget. They said, 'That doesn't count. That was a studio production. This one is an independent production.'

"On FISHER KING, the producers were going around saying that they were the ones who contained the wild beast; they like being the ones that can take this unruly talent and bring it into line. So, I had to prove myself again. This film is on budget, and that'd better be the end of that shit. If I hear it again, I'm going to kill someone. There are only a couple of insurance companies out there, and the other one is the one who insured me on MUNCHAUSEN. They're not going to insure me again!"

Despite his irreverence toward Hollywood machinations, Gilliam denied the "unruly"

tag. "No. I'm determined, and I do what I say. I always say things, and they never believe me. On FISHER KING, I sat down with the studio people and said, 'Here's how it works. You have the film. You give it to the producers. They then give it to me; I give it to the actors, and we shoot. At the end of the shoot, I take it back from the actors, and then you're going to try to take it back from me, but I'm not going to let you.' I said this at the beginning of the film. Then, when it happens, they go crazy! I said, 'I told you.' I've actually made a Terry Gilliam film before," Gilliam giggled, then added with a sigh, "When I'm working, I become very depressed, because I know how complicated it's going to get." □





## ILM pulls some elephants and more out of their CGI hat.

By Dan Persons

If the old margarine commercial is correct, and it's really "not nice to fool Mother Nature," then the guys at Industrial Light & Magic are definitely running the risk of having their facilities struck by a few dozen lightning bolts. Not satisfied with cloning dinosaurs for JURASSIC PARK and resurrecting the dead for CASPER, they've now taken on the surreal task of digitizing the flora and fauna of the African continent for JUMANJI, TriStar's fantasy of an enchanted board game that enmeshes its unwitting players in the perils of a jungle safari. If the ILM crew are at all successful with their conjuring of bats, bugs, and lions for the Joe Johnston-directed pic, ol' Mom Nature is gonna be mighty cheesed-off, indeed.

In years past, the challenge of CGI was merely to get the stuff looking right. Now, with JUMANJI, it's getting it right in bulk quantities. "The scope of the job we had to do is pretty impressive," explained Mark Miller, the film's visual effects producer. "Basically, every time these kids roll the dice, something else comes out of the game that's a consequence they have to deal with. Each one of



ILM modelmakers Brian Gernand (l), Mike Lynch (r) and vision effects producer Mark Miller work with a blue-screen miniature.

those is a miniature—well, not so miniature—sequence of its own: giant mosquitoes come out; bats come out; a little kid gets sucked into the game, which is a cool effect; a stampede of rhinos, elephants, and zebras come smashing through the house, and later smashing through the town square; a bunch of wild, red monkeys come out and tear up the kitchen and the house and then later go on and tear up the town and ride motorcycles around and do

crazy stuff. All of the above used CGI effects."

On the reality front, JUMANJI served as something of a class reunion for the ILM crew, re-teaming them with former Industrial Light & Magic staffer Johnston. "It was great," Miller enthused. "Joe and Larry Franco, who's the producer, had done THE ROCKETEER here, and while I didn't work on that, everybody else here had, so Joe's got a lot of old friends around here, and Larry knew a lot of people. That was a big plus: it's great having a familiar situation, having a director you can just call up on the phone anytime and shoot the shit with and find out what he really thinks, instead of somebody you have to go through nine assistants to get to."

To Miller, one of Johnston's most valuable contributions was his insistence that the high-flying fantasy be grounded in a palpable reality: "When Joe first came on the movie, everything had an element of fantasy to it: the rhinos were more tank-like and much lower to the ground than a real rhino; the monkeys were even farther out and less real than they are now, the lion was more stylized and not as mangy looking as a real lion. On all fronts, and especially on the stampede animals and



Robin Williams and Bonnie Hunt.

the lion and the pelican, he dialed us back towards the real as we went through our design. I think he saw some early things and decided he was going to try to play it as close to real on some of these things. Zoologists are going to look at it and find things wrong with it—our rhinos were built on a sculpt based on half of a black rhino and half of a white rhino, so there's not a rhino that looks like ours. But in the heat of the stampede moment, when things are running by, they project a rhino icon that the audience is familiar with."

Sadly, real-life also intruded in the form of a behind-the-scenes tragedy: having guided the film through its pre-production phase and halfway into plate photography, visual effects supervisor Steve Price lost his life to illness. "Steve actually passed away during the making of the film," Miller noted. "This is his movie from the start, and we were lucky enough when the tragedy happened to be able to plug Ken Ralston in, who had a history of working with Joe from THE ROCKETEER and from the early days around here. That was a godsend at a really hard time."

Such a loss didn't do anything to lessen the technical burden that challenged the ILM staff. Chief amongst the obstacles thrown their way: how to get fur on the bodies of all those





Given that sinking feeling by ILM, menaced by Amalgamated Dynamics bugs.

virtual beasts. Said Miller, "That was the first problem we had to solve: the hair problem, which no one's really done very successfully with graphics before. And especially the moving, long, flowing hair of the lion's mane; that was our first big thing. The minute we got started on this, our first task was to launch our software guys. Christian Rouet, our software manager, Jeff Yost, and David Benson just went nuts on software for the hair. Carl Frederick, who was our CG supervisor, supervised that first portion. That was back in May of '94. It was literally an on-going thing until about a month ago [August, '95], and just about a month ago we finalled our first lion shots.

"It's pretty much the same technique we use for the hair on the monkeys, which while being

easier because it doesn't move around, still created a huge rendering problem for us with just the amount. A monkey has, depending on how close he is to the camera, sometimes a million and a half hairs on his body, each rendered individually and each having to be mapped on for direction and a little movement in the jumping-around scenes. When we first looked at the project, the render times we were coming up with, with what we knew back then, meant that we'd basically have to shut down the company and move everybody out and just put processors in every building to make one of these shots. We were able, by putting extra software guys on it, to figure out how to streamline all this stuff and get the render times down into something of an area where

**"When director Joe Johnston came on the movie," said ILM producer Mark Miller, "it all had an element of fantasy to it. He dialed us back to reality."**

we could make the thing work.

"The real, techno-exciting shot in the movie is the lion stalking down the hallway. It's a big, slow panning shot where you watch the stalk just in a head-shot and then he comes right by the camera and you pan with it and you pan right with its mane as it goes by you and it holds up as individual hairs. That's a shot that, when we started the movie and did the original bid, when we saw the board for it we said, 'IIIIII don't know...' It was like: 'Okay, the lion comes towards us and then we pan with him and he gets close to camera, and before he turns into something that looks terrible, you cut. Right, Joe?' And he was like, 'Okay.' And he never had to cut. So that's really our signature technical shot, as far as showing off what we've done on the hair side."

Although Miller concedes that the full 12 minutes of CGI footage will be delivered close to deadline ("Has anybody every said, 'Nah, no problem, we got it made'?"), he claimed that the complexity of the newly implemented technology has nothing to do with TriStar's decision to push JUMANJI's opening date back from November into December. "That was a marketing decision on their side. We'll be getting our shots in right on time."

Still, the producer does admit that being at the forefront of effects technology—yet again—leaves little opportunity for relaxation: "We've 60 stampeding animals running havoc through a town, and you just go, 'Okay...' What was funny was, on the front-end, we were looking through those shots and going, 'Okay, we can do these,' and I'm saying, 'Whaddya mean we can do these? We've never done these shots!' But everything progresses geometrically around here. It's always the thing that you haven't done at all yet—like the hair on this one—that you're the most worried about going in, and the other stuff you're confident about. And then you get in there, and the shots are still really hard, and they take a lot of planning and a lot of work and a lot of animation and tons of stuff to render, because you've got so many animals in it. So people toss off stuff like it's nothing these days, but you look at them and you say, 'Wow, we really did something here...' It's been wild. I've been working on this since the middle of April, '94. I'm about ready to deliver that last shot and have 'em go, 'Ah!'

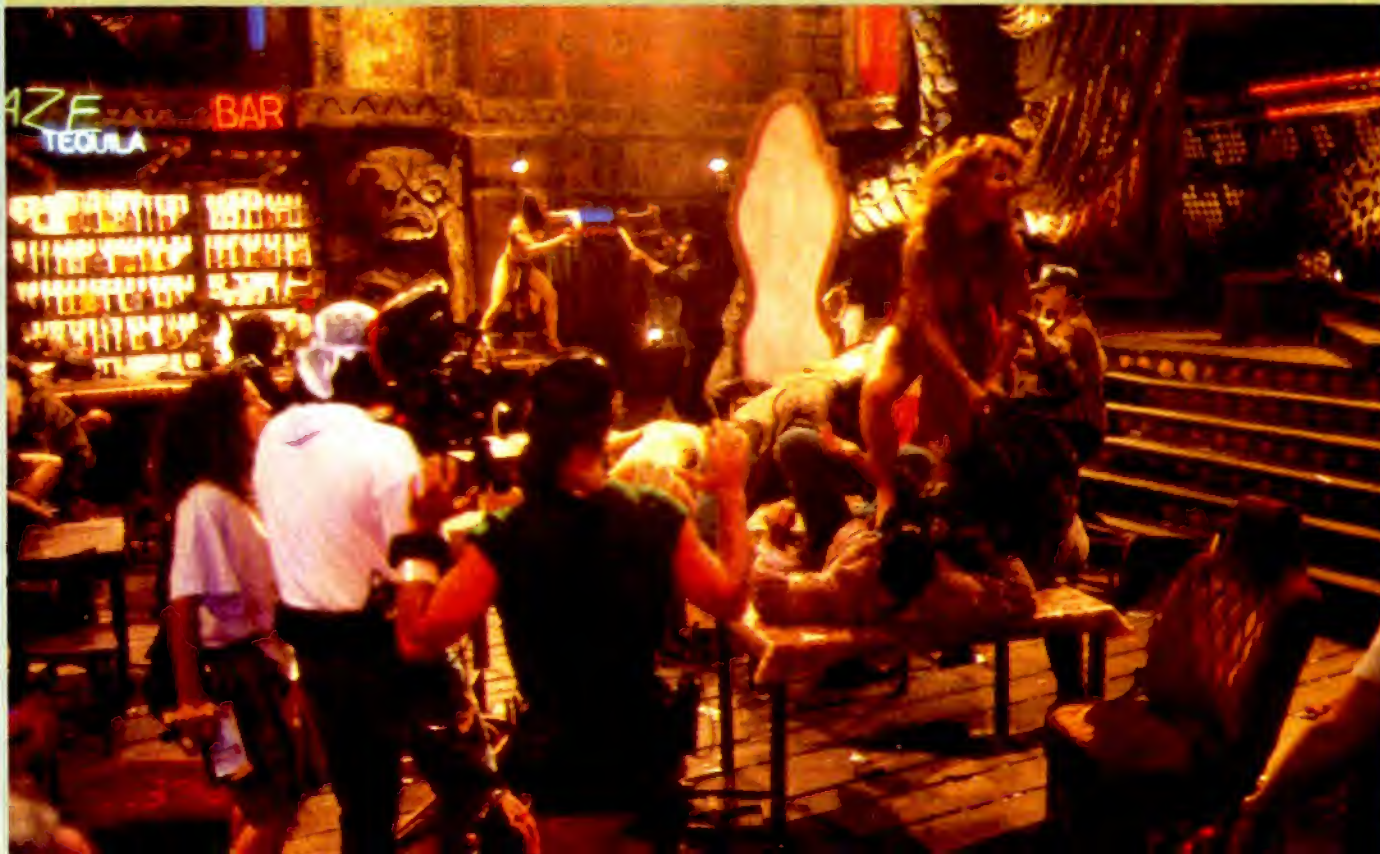
"I'll be done at the end of October, and I'll be sitting on a beach somewhere, I hope, thinking about it with a Piña Colada in my hand." □

The game's animals stampede through town, ILM's complex CGI trickery developed on JURASSIC PARK's dinosaurs render zoo specimens as real as life.





The attack of the Mexican vampire strippers, Marina Oviedo bares fangs and all in *FROM DUSK TILL DAWN*, which Miramax opens December 22. Below: Director Robert Rodriguez (*DESPERADOS*) uses a hand-held camera to capture the action. The horror script was Tarantino's first movie assignment.



# FROM

## Pulp vampires

By Michael Beeler

Like a pack of rambunctious twelve-year-olds with a box of Mexican fireworks, a couple of cans of kerosene and their sister's dolls, Robert Rodriguez, Quentin Tarantino and their goofball gang of testosterone demolition buddies, are preparing to drag their small patch of planet Earth down to the gates of apocalyptic adolescent hell. Miramax, in an unprecedented move, is allowing the unsupervised hombre of tortilla westerns and the gangster guy to wrap their armed and dangerous gag gift in the form of *FROM DUSK TILL DAWN* and place it unsuspectingly beneath your Christmas tree on December 22, 1995.

"[*FROM DUSK TILL DAWN*] is actually advertising itself as a horror film," noted Tarantino, about his Mexican vampire comedy. "There's been this disease in the market place, for a very long time. Even when people make horror films, they do this gymnastic bit—they don't ever call it a horror film.

"Francis Ford Coppola does *DRACULA* and says, 'Well, it's not really a horror film, it's more a love story.' This movie *SPECIES* comes out and they say, 'Well it's a science fiction movie with horrific elements in it.' No! It's a monster movie. All right? Let's call a spade a spade."

Tarantino, who wrote, stars in and executive produces *FROM DUSK TILL DAWN*, directed by Rodriguez, doesn't mince words in describing it. "We're making a head-banging, throat-slashing, blood-flowing, teeth-biting-in-the-jugular horror film," said Tarantino.

Also starred in the \$12 million film are George Clooney (*E.R.*, *RETURN OF THE KILLER TOMATOES*), Harvey Keitel (*MEAN STREETS*, *PULP FICTION*), Salma Hayek (*DESPERADO*, *FOUR ROOMS*) and Juliette Lewis (*STRANGE DAYS*, *NATURAL BORN KILLERS*).

*FROM DUSK TILL DAWN* follows the bloody escapades of two hell-bent brothers, Seth (Clooney) and Richard (Tarantino) Gecko as they burn their way across the dry and dusty Southwest. Abducting the Minister Jacob Fuller (Keitel) and his vacationing family, the brothers slip over the Mexican border and head for a sleazy strip joint called the Titty Twister, which they think will provide them with refuge. But, the reality of

# DUSK TILL DAWN

## Quentin Tarantino's slapstick horror assault.

the situation is that they are being unconsciously drawn to an ancient lair of vampires who dwell in the eternal house of evil and are eager to begin their ritual feeding frenzy.

The violent temperament of this film is sure to attract the attention of the stalwart defenders of human decency. "The violence in this movie is done like SCARFACE," said Clooney, who portrays an armed robber who maintains a personal code of honor. "It's done seriously but it's done so much to excess that you [realize], 'They're kidding.' Which is fun. But, you can bet there'll be the Bob Doles that will come out on this one."

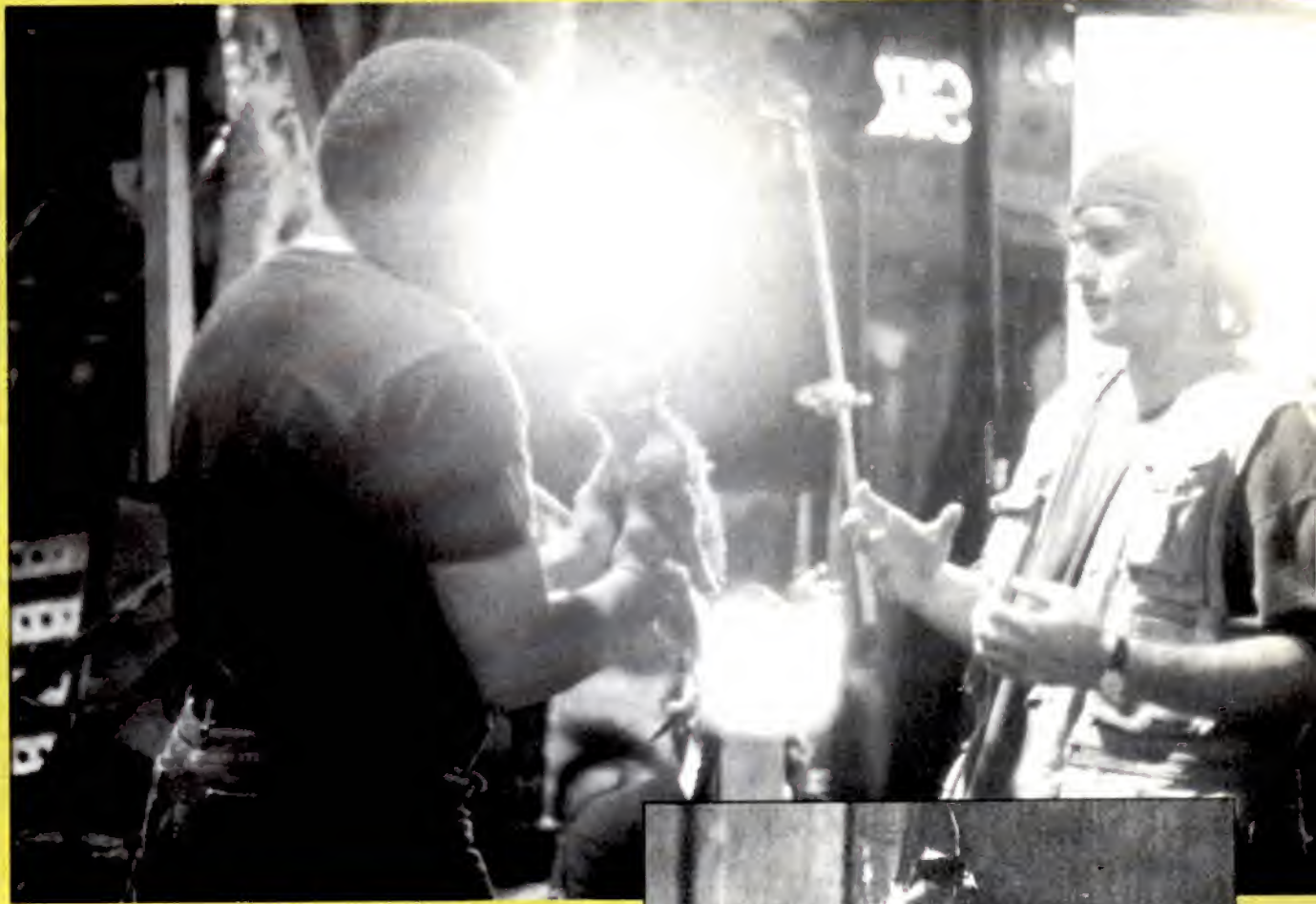
To which Rodriguez simply shrugged his shoulders and added, "[Politicians] try to get votes and we try to sell tickets. We're all in the same business. It's all show biz."

Originally, FROM DUSK TILL DAWN was written as a six-page story by Robert Kurtzman, one of the founders of KNB XFX. He had written it simply as an exploitation vehicle that could be produced cheaply, while using the prosthetic and makeup effects from his shop. Tarantino, who at that time was working for a video company called Imperial Entertainment, was brought in to write the screenplay for \$1,500.

The script spent the next five years or so sitting on the shelf. It wasn't until Tarantino directed his first movie, RESERVOIR DOGS, that people really became interested in the script again. The budget was substantially increased and Rodriguez, who was highly praised for single-handedly writing, directing, filming, producing and editing EL MARIACHI, was asked to direct.

"I was really happy with the script when I wrote it," said Tarantino. "I thought it was really cool. But, I was also a little scared over the years, when there was talk about it getting made. This was my one attempt at writing an exploitation film. And it's good, but this would be really easy to screw up. The wrong person would destroy this.

"It's the only script I've ever written that was that kind of thing. And so over the years different people talked about it. But about two years ago I actually showed it to Robert [Rodriguez] and he read it and he just loved it. 'Man, I'd do that in a second!' he said. So, eventually these other producers got hold of the project and came to me



Rodriguez directs Fred Williamson working with a bat creature puppeteered and created by the KNB EFX Group. Inset: The creature bursts through a wall, horror action that's over the top.

and asked if I would be involved in it. And, I said, 'Yeah, if you get Robert Rodriguez to direct.'"

During the filming of DESPERADO, Rodriguez's second film, Tarantino went to Texas to do one day of filming for a small part. At that time the two men agreed that Tarantino would rewrite the script and Rodriguez would direct FROM DUSK TILL DAWN. Tarantino was thrilled. "Robert would do it 15 times better than I would," said Tarantino about why he didn't choose to direct the film himself. "This is really his kind of thing. This is the kind of cool action fast-paced movie that he does."

Co-producer Elizabeth Avellan cited a couple of other reasons why Rodriguez, her husband, was chosen. "Quentin didn't feel like he could do it himself because it had the Mexican [setting]," said Avellan. "Quentin had never directed anything like that. And, honestly he didn't write it to direct it. It took off because it was a perfect combination. Miramax is very excited about the joining of Quentin and Robert because it's the perfect marriage."



The two filmmakers first met at the 1992 Toronto film festival. The camaraderie of the partnership continued well into the filming of FROM DUSK TILL DAWN. "It could have been tough if [Tarantino] was always looking over [Rodriguez's] shoulder," said producer Lawrence Bender. "These guys are peers. Quentin really respects Robert's work. And there is a real equal share of ideas between Quentin and Robert. They're very different filmmakers but they both challenge each other, with their different styles.

"Robert's very open to suggestions and ideas. He doesn't have this ego where it's he's not going to listen to anybody. You know, he'll even listen to me sometimes. And if ever Robert needs something, Quentin's there. There was never a fear. They're like buddies, these guys."

Even though almost no one associated

# TARANTINO'S PULP HORROR

## HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

*Tarantino wrote the script while a video clerk.*

By Michael Beeler

Long before he baptized us all in his bloody communion of violence and nonchalant mayhem, Quentin Tarantino was just another nine-to-five working stiff. Back then his writing was just a part-time thing, relinquished to after hours, when the streets were empty and channel 5 was off the air. Both *TRUE ROMANCE* and *NATURAL BORN KILLERS* were written during this time in his life when the dreams were big and the paychecks small.

But, all that changed when he was approached by Robert Kurtzman and Jon Esposito, who had a little story about gangsters, vampires and a south of the border Mexican bar called the Titty Twister, that they wanted somebody to flesh out into a screenplay. "Bob Kurtzman's original outline had maybe four paragraphs or about a page and then they get to the Titty Twister and then the next six pages were inside the Titty Twister," said Tarantino. "Well, my take was, 'Let's put the Titty Twister way, way away! And, let's really build up to the point when they get there.'

"So, it's just a total suspense film with not even a hint of horror. You don't hear some radio thing saying, 'There have been mysterious disappearances in Mexico!' There's no hint that there's going to be vampires at all. And then when they show up it's like whoosh! And the audience, like the characters in the movie, can't believe what's in their lap and what they have to deal with. The movie really does this kind of about-face."

Tarantino wrote the script in



Co-producers Jon Esposito (l) and Robert Kurtzman (r) on location with George Clooney and Tarantino, a low-budget exercise catapulted into the big leagues.

less than a month and with the money he received he was finally able to leave his day job and realize his dream of becoming a writer. "That was the first money I was ever paid for doing my art, for doing what I do," said Tarantino. "I quit my day job on that \$1,500. Now, that was not a lot of money to stake yourself on a new life but it worked out all right. I ended up never having to take a day job again because from that job I got \$7,000 to do a rewrite on this little film and \$10,000 to do a writing job on this little film. I was actually supporting myself. Not beautifully at first but well enough. Actually I was doing better than I had ever done before."

For roughly the next five years Tarantino's screenplay of *FROM DUSK TILL DAWN* followed the path of many scripts in Hollywood that go into development and then never see the light of day. "The script for *FROM DUSK TILL DAWN* was never really dormant, it

was in development hell," said Kurtzman, the K in *KNB EFX*, who hoped to make the script his directing debut. "I had it set up that we were going to do it as a *CRYPT* film. We were in final negotiations to do it as the first film. It would have been *DEMON KNIGHT*. And, negotiations just fell through. It was kind of a nightmare.

"After five years of that, I decided to bail out as the director and I became unattached from it for a while. Then once Quentin became big, the project became bigger. People wanted to do it for more money and because I hadn't directed anything they wouldn't let me direct it at a \$10 million budget because I was a first-timer. I struggled with that for awhile and then decided it was time to move on and just get the movie off the ground. I took the producing credit and story credit and did the effects."

It was about this time that Robert Rodriguez (*EL MARI-*

*ACHI, DESPERADO*) was brought into the project as the director and Tarantino agreed to do a rewrite of his first screenplay. "Robert was actually the real reason why the project got going," said Kurtzman. "I optioned the script to some producers and they hooked up Robert, whom I had never met before. Robert took it back to Quentin and said, 'I think I want to do this.' And, Quentin said, 'Great, then I'll be involved!'

Noted Kurtzman, "The script really hasn't changed very much. When Quentin came on to do a rewrite, he just really polished up a lot of dialogue and stuff that he wanted to play with, but it's the same movie."

Most of Tarantino's rewriting of the script concentrated on taking what he described as two-dimensional exploitation characters and giving them a more three-dimensional feel. "I'd written the script a long time ago," admitted Tarantino. "I wrote it to be an exploitation movie and that's exactly what it was supposed to be. It wasn't some lofty concept film.

"So, I looked at the script again that I originally wrote with no money and in three weeks. And I felt like I could improve on it because now I had a little bit more time and I'd become a better writer. I kept the structure almost exactly the same. In fact, every time I tried to add a scene I realized, how good the structure was because all of a sudden things didn't make sense, things didn't work as good as they did. But what I could really do was really invest a lot into the characters."

The teenage Kate Fuller



Filming the vampire strippers, Kurtzman (l) prepares to spray some blood. Originally to direct, Kurtzman kept the gore concession with his KNB Efx.

## HORROR IS MY BUSINESS

**“I get to wake up each morning and be deranged,” said director Robert Rodriguez, “because I’m making a horror film, which is wonderful. I just love genre films.”**

with the film has ever worked in the horror genre before, except the effects people, they are all familiar with the bloody end of the action genre. Rodriguez, in particular, feels very comfortable working in the genre film arena and hopes to stay there for a long time. “I just love genre films,” said Rodriguez, who, on the recommendation of Greg Nicotero from KNB, viewed John Carpenter’s *THE THING* and Peter Jackson’s *BRAIN DEAD*, in preparation of doing *FROM DUSK TILL DAWN*. “It’s the best thing that could have happened. I’m just very blessed that *EL MARIACHI* did so well. The only reason I did *MARIACHI*, and I was going to do three of them, was just to learn how to tell feature stories because I’d made so many short films like *FOUR ROOMS* and those kind of stories. Really short.

“I wanted to learn how to tell a longer picture. I thought that would be good practice and at the same time I could make some money by selling it to Spanish video. And then with the money I’d go and make a real picture, like a personal story or like a *SHE’S GOT TO HAVE IT* or *SEX, LIES AND VIDEO TAPE*. That’s why it was a genre picture, ’cause it wasn’t going to be the picture I was go-

ing to show to everybody. I just thought, ‘I’ll just go and make a fun movie, a shoot ’em up.’ And that’s the movie that went out everywhere and I thought, ‘All right! Now I don’t have to go and make serious movies. I’m pigeonholed in fun movies and that’s fucking where I want to stay!’”

Rodriguez felt very fortunate while making *FROM DUSK TILL DAWN* because, as he put it, “I get to wake up each morning and be deranged because I’m making a horror film, which is wonderful.” When we asked if there was a serious film inside him, such as *THE BRIDGES OF MADISON COUNTY*, Clooney chided, “Yeah, but he’d blow up the bridge! Maybe he’d make a *BRIDGES OF MADISON COUNTY OVER THE RIVER KWAI!*”

Rodriguez approached the question a little bit more soberly. “I could never say never, but I’d have to be in a completely different mind set, much further down the line, to be interested in really telling something like that for the sake of impressing people and saying, ‘I really need to do a serious film, so that people will take me seriously.’ No. That’s not why I’m here. This a fun place to be. I don’t have to worry about making

Production designer Cecelia Montiel (l) and set decorator Felipe Fernandez confer with director Robert Rodriguez on the skull-like stage of the strip bar.



character was improved upon when Tarantino found out that Juliette Lewis would be playing the part. “I’m friends with Juliette, and she called me on the phone,” said Tarantino. “She said she had read the original script and was interested in doing it. She’s one of the coolest young actresses in America and I thought I better make this part worthy of her. I expanded her part a little, just to make it worth doing.”

But Tarantino’s investment in the characters did not include painting the vampires of the movie as brooding, sensitive outsiders dealing with the guilt and horror of their undead state. “I find it really kind of misleading to call this a vampire movie,” said Tarantino. “And, that’s just because of the way that vampire movies are done these days. They’re revisionist. Everything is revisionist. Vampire movies now get into the psyche of the vampire’s pain from killing all those people and the torture of having to live for thousands of years.

“This isn’t about any of that! These vampires are a bunch of fucking beast monsters! They don’t have a soul! They don’t give a fuck! They’re vampires because they exist off of blood and if they bite you, you’ll turn into a vampire. They’re bat, rat, filthy, odorous creatures, just disgusting monsters. We never

identify or respect them and have no remorse in killing all of them.”

Tarantino confessed that there is deeper meaning to the script than just a bloody Mexican gore fest. The subtext, he feels, may not be for everyone. “There’s subtext in all my work,” said Tarantino. “There’s definitely a second drama going on underneath. That’s what makes it special. It’s there for you if you want to get into discussions about the loss of faith. It’s treated seriously, but it’s subtext. That’s what makes it worth doing. I don’t like to highlight it. I’m not making a message movie.”

In retrospect the script and the process of finally bringing it to the screen had a very dramatic impact on Tarantino’s life. It was the project that finally allowed him to bring his highly electric form of storytelling to the doorstep of the world. “Even more than directing my first movie, writing *FROM DUSK TILL DAWN* was like the most exciting time in my life,” said Tarantino. “When your life changes over from your writing in your spare time and working your day job to where you can actually support yourself doing what you do, that was so terrific. I’m getting goose bumps just thinking about it. There was no other jump that I have had in my life, that was as big a jump as that.” □

THE BRIDGES OF MADISON COUNTY or I won't get my next job because they'll never take me seriously. People are coming to me to make lower-budget movies that will make them a lot of money because they're entertaining and they have production value, that is bigger than the money that is being spent on them. Which you just don't get these days."

In creating his movies, Rodriguez in the last few years has quite literally moved from the bargain basement of filmmaking, where he made movies for a few thousand dollars, to the comparative penthouse suite of multi-million-dollar big-budget affairs. And although he seems to be adapting quite well, there have been changes in how he addresses each production. "There is a big difference in what he's doing now," explained Avellan, who during filming in Los Angeles was seven months pregnant with their first child, a boy they named Rocket Valentino Rodriguez. "Obviously, on EL MARIACHI we had no money. None! I mean, [Rodriguez] was the only crew member. [She started laughing.] He was the one and only crew."

Avellan first met Rodriguez at the University of Texas at Austin, where they were both students. Impressed with his unique storytelling abilities, she

Producer Elizabeth Avellan (l) on the set with star, soon-to-be-godmother and best friend Salma Hayek.



## DIRECTOR-TURNED-ACTOR

**"The fact I'm not directing is terrific, because I trust Robert Rodriguez," said Quentin Tarantino. "It's given me a freedom as an actor that I've never had before."**



Juliette Lewis as Kate Fuller arms herself with a crossbow to fight off the vampires. Lewis starred in Tarantino's script of NATURAL BORN KILLERS.

was soon helping him produce and promote a number of his student projects in film festivals around the country. She worked as an animator on his award-winning 16mm student film BEDHEAD and after college helped produce both EL MARIACHI and DESPERADO. They were eventually married and make their home in Austin, Texas.

On FROM DUSK TILL DAWN Avellan helped assemble a wide variety of talent from all over the world, in order to assist Rodriguez in bringing his vision to fruition. "The most important thing, to me, is Robert's vision and that's why I put this crew together," said Avellan. "He works best when the crew not only comes to him and listens to what he has to say but they also come with their own ideas and present things to him."

"The highly creative positions like costume designer [Graciela Mazon], production designer [Cecilia Montiel], the set decorator [Felipe Fernandez] and the director of photography [Guillermo Navarro], are all the same people that we had on DESPERADO. They're peo-

ple that I gathered for Robert, that I knew would be able to not only carry out his vision, as he saw it, but that would bring to the picture their point of view and their creativity."

**C**asting the main characters was more of a joint effort between Tarantino and Rodriguez, who deferred to his writer/producer. "We both had different ideas about some of the characters," explained Rodriguez. "Since [Tarantino] wrote it, he knew what he had in mind. I didn't realize his idea for Seth was so much older [than Richard]. I thought they were both younger. That's the way I read it because the script says, 'a young man.' I thought his casting ideas were more for the preacher than for Seth, guys like Harvey Keitel and Christopher Walken. But, no idea is wrong."

Tarantino cast himself as Richard Gecko, the younger and wilder of the two gangsters. "I'm having an acting experience that I've never had," said Tarantino, who admitted that his performance in DESTINY

URNS ON THE RADIO was mediocre at best. "The fact I'm not directing it is terrific because I trust Robert. It's given me a freedom as an actor that I've never had before. If you were to come here, when I was playing Richie, this psychopath kid, I wouldn't even be doing this interview. If I was playing Richie I couldn't talk to you. I could only talk to you as Richie. I'm not talking like some psycho weird method actor thing, it's just I'm in that place."

"When I was playing Richie, on the drive home I would start, little by little, to become Quentin again. And, by the time I got home I'd be Quentin. And then I'd kind of go through the whole thing again, from Quentin's perspective. And, I've never been there before. When I'm doing a scene, I might not be right, I might be wrong but I'm not false. I am coming from Richie's perspective. I just looked at some of the dailies of this last week and I felt, 'Man, I was there!' I'm not saying I was great, I'm just saying I was there. I was the guy. Quentin was totally left at home. As a personal epiphany as an actor, I've turned a corner. I'm in a new place that I never was before."

Coming from the fast-paced sets of the highly successful NBC television series E.R., where he plays the good-hearted Dr. Douglas Ross, George Clooney found his FROM DUSK TILL DAWN experience to be a pleasant romp. "They're about the same except I get to wear a tattoo in this one," declared Clooney. "But the pace here is easier. On E.R. we're shooting nine pages a day. Our problem is not acting as much as it is just trying to get the words accurately out of our mouths in a take. If you screw up, you have to start all over again, with all the extras and eight actors all working at the same time. And it's all about medical stuff and it's easy to screw that stuff up. It's a relief to just stick a gun in some guy's mouth and blow the back of his head off." (Clooney let loose with a little sick laugh.)

Commenting on his sex symbol image in the media, Clooney noted that he doesn't get attacked on the street or at

# TARANTINO'S PULP HORROR

## THE PRICE OF FAME

*Tarantino on his critics, acting and celebrity.*

By Michael Beeler

Fame is a tough snake to charm and right now no one knows that better than Quentin Tarantino, the scripter, star and executive producer of *FROM DUSK TILL DAWN*. A former video store clerk in Southern California, he rocketed to critical as well as commercial success with the release of *PULP FICTION*, only the second film he directed. Since that time, Tarantino has begun the process of learning to live under the heavy scrutiny of the self-appointed dogs of Hollywood. It hasn't been easy.

Critics were quick to laud Tarantino's directing talents in *RESERVOIR DOGS* and *PULP FICTION* and many of them praised his screenwriting abilities on *TRUE ROMANCE* and *NATURAL BORN KILLERS*. But when it comes to his acting skills, movie reviewers have not been kind. Tarantino was probably slammed the hardest for his stint in *DESTINY TURNS ON THE RADIO*, a knock Tarantino feels may be justified. "I couldn't have been more distracted at the time than when I did [*DESTINY TURNS ON THE RADIO*] and I think it shows," admitted Tarantino. "I don't think I was as bad as some critics said I was, but I was mediocre."

"Some critics wrote that I was shit. And you could make the analogy that mediocre is shit. I'll buy that. All right. But I don't want to be mediocre. So, yeah, I was the worst form of



Tarantino as Richard, George Clooney as Seth, with vampire stripper Salma Hayek. Tarantino is sensitive to the pans his acting got in *DESTINY TURNS ON THE RADIO*.

shit, as far as I was concerned. But part of it was just because I was distracted. I started shooting that movie the week before *PULP FICTION* opened. I couldn't have been so not there."

"But the cool thing about it was when I looked at myself in the movie, it was like, 'Okay, I can't do that ever again!' If I'm going to do it, I've got to commit 100%. This isn't the celebrity show. I'm not Charro. I'm an actor. In a way, the lessons I learned from that movie are hopefully going to be bearing fruit." Tarantino is excited by his performance as the crazed killer in *FROM DUSK TILL DAWN*.

Regardless of how the critics may perceive him, Tarantino is loved by audiences. He has become a well-established member of the MTV generation, the new, young, smart Hollywood that is quickly taking over the sacred landscape of filmdom.

In Europe, *PULP FICTION* posters displayed more pictures of Tarantino than the movie's extraordinary ensemble cast.

"It's pretty cool," said Tarantino. "You hear old vaudevillians say, 'I kill 'em in Omaha! A big marquee and lines around the block.' I'm that way in England. It's great. How could you not love it?"

Tarantino does admit that fame does have a cost and there are some real mental drawbacks to being so popular and well-known. He noted, "One of the bummers is, I like to walk. I'm one of the few people in Los Angeles who likes to walk. And the neighborhood that I live in—West Hollywood—is one of the few areas that is sort of village like, you can actually walk. And I find that I make less eye contact with people on the street. Basically everyone turns into a homeless person.

You make eye contact with a homeless person and they start going toward you. That's kind of how everybody is now.

"It's also kind of a bummer when I'm with my girlfriend and we're out having dinner or just trying to have an evening by ourselves and people just keep coming up. I never lose it, but that's the only time when I say, 'You have eyes. If I were you I would see that I'm with my lady and know how to respect that.'"

The other problem Tarantino is learning to deal with is the fact that it is becoming increasingly more difficult for him to frequent the places he used to love to go to and hang out. "The days of going into a used record store and just zoning out, looking through records for three hours, are gone," lamented Tarantino. "Going into a video store and going through the videos, looking at every title they have, trying to find some old spaghetti western, that's gone. [Goes into a sort of hippie cool dude voice] 'Could you like sign this poster, dude?'"

"I still do that, but it's not like the way I used to do it. I've got to deal with people. Either I'm signing or sometimes I'll just say, 'It's my day off.' And they respect that. I'll shake their hand because I don't want to make anyone feel bad about anything. It's just that I want to live my life, too. I'm not going to give up my life, but I'm not going to give up my courtesy either. So, it's just about finding that balance." □

# TARANTINO'S PULP HORROR

## MAKEUP EFFECTS

*Rob Kurtzman let go as director, but hung onto the makeup work for KNB.*

*By Michael Beeler*

A creative frenzy. That's what Rob Kurtzman, Greg Nicotero and Howard Berger's EFX Group's (KNB) mini effects shop looked like on the sound stages where *FROM DUSK TILL DAWN* was being filmed. Basically just a large room, the set through the course of the production had become absolutely stuffed with all sorts of nasty, evil, horrid-looking prosthetic vampires and creatures. Jumbled together, the mutated demons, mixed with buckets of blood, severed arms, decapitated heads, vats of goo and various butchered torsos, seemed somewhat Felliniesque or maybe even a bit like a Clive Barker nightmare.

Supporting the massive splatter fest of comedic horror, KNB, which has created effects for over 70 feature films and television productions, often found that too much was just barely enough. "[*FROM DUSK TILL DAWN*] has a lot of monsters," said Kurtzman, while on the set of *THE DEMOLITIONIST*, an ultimate '90s female super hero movie, on which he is making his feature directing debut. "It's a compilation of all kinds of stuff. We had this room full of monsters and constantly we were just pulling stuff out and throwing blood on it. Every day there's a hundred things going on effects-wise—pyro, makeup, prosthetics and other stuff."



Jacque Lawson as a stripper-turned-vampire in prosthetics by KNB, sans contact lenses, a climactic death scene transformation.

In order to provide an assortment of dead bodies for the film KNB wound up digging into their storage and using various body molds from past projects. "We literally emptied the shelves at KNB of any bodies that we had," said Nicotero. "You'll see Marvin from *PULP FICTION* floating around on the set. Molds from *THE PEOPLE UNDER THE STAIRS*, even Kevin O'Connor from *LORD OF ILLUSIONS*.

"All those people will probably be calling SAG saying, 'I want residuals! My head was on that bar for four weeks!' It was just one of those things where we realized we needed more body parts!" And, we were sitting there cutting up old bodies

and saying, 'Hey, you remember old Dr. Giggles?' 'Oh yeah!' 'Well, here you go!'"

A number of KNB's technicians even served double duty when director Robert Rodriguez asked if they would do some cameos in the movie. Being long-haired and bearded hippie types, Rodriguez felt KNB artists could fill in as the motley bikers and truckers in the Mexican bar, where the vampires and gangsters eventually clash. Rodriguez had a whole slew of additional requests of KNB.

"Robert is an incredibly creative director," said Nicotero. "He's the kind of person that continually comes up with new stuff, as we're shooting. And a lot of times, for effects people,

that could be a very dangerous situation because suddenly you find yourself not having what the director wants. But in this case, we had a five-month prep period with Robert so we really sat with him and went over the entire ending of the movie. It gave us an opportunity to say, 'Well, okay.'

"It's like working with Sam Raimi, because Sam's the kind of director who on *THE ARMY OF DARKNESS* would be saying, 'How many puppets do you guys have?' And, we'd say, 'We got ten.' And, he came back with, 'Then I want ten puppets in the shot.' He knows what you have so he wants to use it. Robert became so familiar with the stuff that we were building

the golf courses, but he has seen a difference in how some actresses treat him. "The actresses are now saying, 'George, can we rehearse the love scene one more time?'" confessed Clooney. "The difficult thing is you have to actually live up to that image when it comes down to it and you drop your pants. But I have a stunt double now, a wienie wrangler."

Ever the wise-cracking smart ass, Clooney related how he told Rodriguez they could be sure the movie would be a hit with the ticket-buying public. "Robert is always asking me, 'George, how would you shoot this?' And I just say, 'If there is some way you can just cut to me, I think you've got a movie!'"

Rodriguez cut to Clooney quite often but it was not the shot that the handsome leading man was looking for. "I'm like the dog in *EL MARIACHI*," said Clooney. "When [Robert] did *EL MARIACHI* he didn't have a sound sync camera so later after filming he would have the actors repeat their lines into a tape recorder. He also did shots of this dog. And, then every time the voices and film would get out of sync, [which happened every couple of words," noted Rodriguez] he'd just cut to the dog. In this film I've become that dog in a lot of the scenes."

Laddling on blood by the jug, a set dresser prepares a KNB effects dummy for blood-soaked shooting.







Greg Nicotero (r) and Gino Crognale dress the staked vampire strippers for the aftermath (left) of Fred Williamson's fight in the strip club.



that he knew what we had and what we could do."

In several instances, requests for certain shots were later reversed and KNB would come up with creative solutions in order to make use of their creations in different ways. "A rat creature was in the original draft that Quentin [Tarantino] wrote, several years ago," said Nicotero. "Originally Kate [Juliette Lewis] saw a little rat scurry out from behind the crates and then she turns away and as she turns away it grows into this thing and they have a big fight scene.

"Then we got the rewrite and the scene wasn't in there. I said, 'Oh shit, we got this rat creature that we already started building, what are we going to do?' The gag now is that Tom Savini [noted director, actor, writer and makeup effects artist], who gave me my start ten years ago in *DAY OF THE DEAD*, gets his head decapitated and then his body sort of transforms into a rat. And Tom asked us, 'Why am I a rat?' And we just said, 'Well, we had a rat creature, we

needed a death for you, it just sort of worked out."

Part of the fun of this project for KNB was getting another chance to work extensively with Tarantino. Having worked on both of his films as directors, they were jazzed to introduce the horror genre and all its toys to the already eccentrically charged hot shot pop quizzer. "Quentin's people are dying to see what would a Quentin Tarantino horror movie look like," said Nicotero. "When we were shooting [FROM DUSK TILL DAWN] Quentin often came up and said, 'This is too gross, get out of here!'

"And it was funny, because we did *RESERVOIR DOGS* and *PULP FICTION* and *FOUR ROOMS* with these guys, but it was usually like a day here or there—cutting an ear off or blowing Marvin's head up in the back seat.' Especially in *PULP FICTION*, where Quentin, at our first meeting, said, 'Nothing you do will be in this movie. We're shooting it all for the ratings board. Nine times out of ten it'll all be cut out.' So first day on the set [of FROM DUSK TILL DAWN] he said, 'Well I guess we're going to spend a little time together on this one.' And we've been here every day for over a month. [Director] Robert [Rodriguez] actually designed Quentin's makeup. It's kind of interesting.

## TESTOSTERONE HORROR

**"If all the gags stay in the movie, this movie is going to be all balls," said Greg Nicotero. "We've gone through 35 gallons of blood already! It's been amazing!"**

It's sort of the Mr. Hyde version of Quentin."

Having recently worked on the production of Clive Barker's *LORD OF ILLUSIONS*, Nicotero noted that although Barker and Rodriguez were different, they did have one thing in common. Both were able to graphically express their desires since Barker is an acclaimed artist and Rodriguez is an award-winning cartoonist. "They're completely different except they both have pretty amazing imaginations," said Nicotero. "The fact that they're both illustrators helps a lot. Sometimes you have directors that can't articulate exactly what they want. Both Robert and Clive are very articulate about what they want. "Robert shoots a lot like Sam Raimi does. He wants scope in every shot."

The highly inventive Rodriguez, who enjoyed presenting KNB with creative ideas on doing many of the effects, ended up realizing a few of his dream gross-out shots. "[Rodriguez] would come up every now and then with a great gag," said Nicotero. "Some of them are so disgusting that I'd look at them and say, 'Robert you came up with that?' We had a creature that had a bunch of boils on her

face. Robert said, 'Let's have her throw a guy down and walk up and just squeeze the boil and shoot out some white puss.'

"So we came back and rigged it up and went on set and he didn't tell anybody because he was so into it. They threw the stunt guy down and she goes up to him and this white milky stuff shot out of her face. Everyone was gagging, 'Ahhh that's so gross!' And Robert was boasting, 'I've always wanted to do that in a movie!'"

Cranking, pumping, flashing, dragging and then kicking it in again, KNB kept up with the energetic pace that Rodriguez set, jamming in the creative frenzy that ignites their twisted little minds. And proving, once again, why they are considered one of the top effects shops in the business today. "If all these gags stay in the movie, this movie is going to be all balls," said Nicotero. "We've gone through around 35 gallons of blood already. Every creature that we have has blood tubing already rigged in the mouth, so it can bite somebody and blood can spray. It's been an amazing amount of stuff. The challenge really is just the quick pace because Robert's very used to shooting stuff very quickly." □

Director Robert Rodriguez works with KNB supervisor Howarde Berger on filming a puppet of Berger's character. A lot of the KNB crew were extras.



# TARANTINO'S PULP HORROR

## CARTOONY DIRECTOR

*Robert Rodriguez is an artist with a comic flair.*

*By Michael Beeler*

If you've never really seen a Robert Rodriguez film, it's kind of hard to imagine what a wonderfully creative comedic mind he has. Both *EL MARIACHI* and *DESPERADO*, from the trailers at least, give the impression that Rodriguez is only about highly volatile, hyper-kinetic and totally lethal filmmaking. But he's also very funny and his student and commercial films have always reflected his marvelous sense of humor.

Rodriguez's comedic talents have also been evident in his award-winning cartoon drawings. "I was a cartoonist for three years," he said. "I had to write and draw and create jokes every day." Rodriguez is the creator of the cartoon strip entitled "Los Hooligans," which appeared in *The Daily Texas* newspaper.

During the development stage of *FROM DUSK TILL DAWN* Rodriguez came up with a funny little drawing that eventually made it's way into the movie, via the guys at the KNB prosthetic shop, a creature dubbed the "stomach-mouth-vamp-bitch."

Rodriguez seemed proud of the part he had in creating one of the film's gut-wrenching effects. "I was doodling on the set of *DESPERADO* one day and came up with the concept," he said.

"You can see it's a harmless little doodle, kind of cartoony. By the time they made it in 3-D each one of these little warts I drew to give it some texture turned out completely gross. I couldn't even look at it. That's



Rodriguez, shooting in the *Titty Twister*. Inset: Slating his cartoon monster design.

kind of what's fun about making this movie."

Rodriguez, with less money than it would take to buy a stripped-down domestic economy car, made his directorial debut with a little movie called *EL MARIACHI*. Being the only crew member on the film, which he cast with friends, Rodriguez wrote, directed, filmed and edited the entire feature all by himself.

Rodriguez didn't think much of the film but Columbia Pictures did and convinced him to let them release the piece theatrically, where it was warmly received with critical acclaim. Subsequently Columbia gave Rodriguez a two-year production deal. And that resulted in *DESPERADO*, his second film, filmed with a real budget, cast and crew.

Noted Elizabeth Avellan, wife of Rodriguez and co-producer of *FROM DUSK TILL DAWN*, about stumbling onto

the Hollywood landscape in such a big way. "I knew that Robert would always get there. I had no doubts as to his talents. We just didn't think it was going to happen with *EL MARIACHI*. When it happened with *MARIACHI* we were in shock."

Ultimately, Rodriguez's little \$7,000 wonder had an even greater impact within the film industry that is highlighted these days by \$100 million-plus production budgets and \$20 million-per-film actors. Rodriguez's colorful tale about a drug lord mistaking a young musician for a revenge-seeking hit man, was a simple reminder that movies are about telling stories. And that passionate people can tell good stories on almost any kind of a budget.

"I felt for so long that I could never be a filmmaker because I didn't have \$600,000 to spend on a first film like Spike Lee," said Rodriguez. "I was brainwashed all that time, that I was-

n't making a real movie. And the truth was I was making movies then. It was filmmaking."

Actually, Rodriguez has always seemed to have a knack for filmmaking, on almost nonexistent production budgets. While a student at the University of Texas at Austin, Rodriguez filmed almost 30 student films using mostly borrowed equipment and very little money.

*BEDHEAD*, one of his student films, went on to win a number of awards on the festival circuit, was later aired on PBS and added to the tail end of most copies of *EL MARIACHI* now in video stores. And the most

amazing thing is that the film was done using little more than a skate board, a bike, the family's back yard, an old Bell and Howell camera, about \$800 and his little brothers and sisters.

"[Theatrically releasing *EL MARIACHI*] was exciting for me," said Rodriguez. "It was inspiring for me just to see that could happen. And to know that no matter what happened to me in my career, that probably the best reviews I'll ever get were for a movie I did all by myself, with no money."

"I guess that's why my confidence level is where it's at, because my first movie was *MARIACHI* and not a movie that I did with a big crew, where I didn't write it. I know no matter what happens I can always get my hands dirty again and start all over again from scratch. I can do another one. It's just a good feeling to know that if everything goes away, what got me here in the first place is still here." □

Even though Clooney is very much the man of the hour in Hollywood these days, he has definitely had his share of canine roles before. Often referring to himself as a hack actor, he's appeared in numerous episodic roles for such shows as *SISTERS*, *ROSEANNE*, *FACTS OF LIFE*, *BODIES OF EVIDENCE* and *BABY TALK*. But coming from a well-respected family in the entertainment business, he seems to take it all in stride. He is the son of American Movie Classics host Nick Clooney, the former KNBC news anchor; the nephew of singer Rosemary Clooney and the cousin of actor Miguel Ferrer (*THE STAND*, *TWIN PEAKS*, *ROBOCOP*), whose father was Jose Ferrer (*CYRANO DE BERGERAC*, *THE CAINE MUTINY*, *DUNE*).

"[My family] taught me how to deal with success when you're successful and failure when you fail," said Clooney. "You're never as good as they say you are and you're never as bad as they say you are. It's that simple. That's how you win. Right now is the year of my life. I'm getting a lot of offers. Any film that I want next year, at any studio and they'll hold the film until I'm ready to do it. The world changed for me. And that's a great thing. But next year you can be sure it'll be me asking, 'Do you want fries with that?'"

Obviously, with Tarantino and Clooney playing brothers and doing a lot of scenes together, you could expect that there would be a lot of joking on the set. Noted Tarantino, "When I was looking at some of the footage between me and George, what I'm really happy about, is even though we're doing a scene and we might be doing a number of different takes on it, we go with whatever emotion creeps into that take. If he says something that's horrifying and it strikes me funny, I laugh because that's the reality of that moment. And then he laughs.

"And that might be completely wrong for the scene. That's why we do other takes. But, the reality of that moment was to go in that direction."

Tarantino didn't feel that there would be a sequel to *FROM DUSK TILL DAWN*,

## MILLIONS FOR MAYHEM

**"We have the same budget that Quentin had with PULP FICTION," said producer Elizabeth Avellan. "Any extra money is going toward the makeup and effects."**



Director Robert Rodriguez (with guitar), flanked by pyrotechnicians Charles Belardinelli (l) and Tom Bellissimo and the crew of goopy vampire bombers.

felt there could be an interesting movie in fleshing out the story of the Gecko brothers that precedes their descent into the underworld of Mexican vampires. "There is a total wealth of material for a prequel of the Gecko Brothers," he said. "Me and George would do it at the drop of a hat."

**C**ontinuing the same six-days-a-week filming schedule he maintained during the production of *DESPERADO*, Rodriguez found *FROM DUSK TILL DAWN* a much more exhausting process. He attributed this to the increased logistical problems faced with bigger sets, extensive special effects and a wide array of prosthetic monsters. The director's need to be involved with almost every facet of what he has referred to as his "personal vision" could also have had something to do with it.

"I still direct and operate the camera and the Steadicam," said Rodriguez. "I'm still the editor, getting more into or back into what I did on all the sound editing for my first film. And

now I'm getting more into the sound effects, music editing and all that post-production stuff, just because it's more fun. But, you also get more involved because you realize that you've got a vision and this is a personal statement as a movie. You work much harder than at any other time, put in the hours, pay attention to detail and put in the extra mileage. It can become an obsessive kind of thing."

Avellan downplayed the film's \$12 million budget as a step up. "We basically have the same budget that Quentin had with *PULP FICTION* [around \$8 million], plus some extra for the special effects, around two or three million," said Avellan. "People say, 'Oh you have more money!' And, I say, 'No, the extra money is going toward the visuals, makeup and the special effects, which is half of the movie.'"

The rip-roaring, rollicking rhapsody in rock and roll effects of *FROM DUSK TILL DAWN* guarantee that regardless of how audiences and critics receive the movie, it will not be visually boring. This fact was clearly highlighted on the set of the *Titty Twister* by Tom Bellis-

simo, who is working in partnership with Charlie Belardinelli to produce the mechanical and pyrotechnic effects. Working on the sets in Los Angeles, they were responsible for blowing up everything including over a dozen vampires, setting numerous things on fire and producing the effects of a seemingly endless barrage of bullets. "Inside this room we've been doing mega explosions, along with bullet hits all over the place," explained Bellissimo. "We've been working inside here for over a month."

*FROM DUSK TILL DAWN* is a vampire movie, you would expect that it's going to have a bit of blood and gore attached to it. You know, some stakes driven through the heart and all that gross kind of stuff. But, this is a Robert Rodriguez and Quentin Tarantino horror comedy. And a little red dye and some makeup effects is just not going to cut it with these boys. So forget about vampires that get nailed, bleed, gasp and then turn into dust. When these blood suckers go, they burst into flames and then explode into a million pieces of goopy, blood dripping flesh and fangs. It's big. It's loud. And, it's very messy.

The film's set of the *Titty Twister* was littered with an unbelievable amount of raw carnage. "We used a bunch of

George Clooney as Seth, the star of *ER* revving up some real fire power to blow away the vampires.



# TARANTINO'S PULP HORROR

## THE TITTY TWISTER

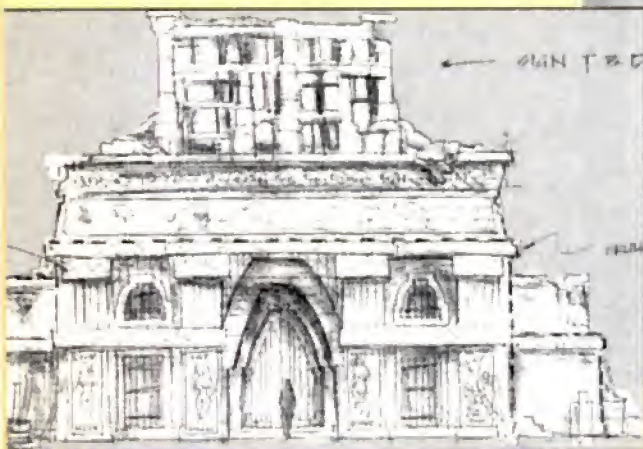
*Designing the vampire's Mayan strip club lair.*

By Michael Beeler

Crossing the dusty wasteland of Mexico, the ultra-violent Gecko brothers, along with their captives, the Fuller family, reach their in-



The exterior of the vampire bar, built from the dust up, on a dry lake bed outside Barstow, California. Inset: Production design by Cecilia Montiel.



tended destination. From the outside, the Titty Twister bar seems to be little more than a worn down oasis in a harsh land. Once inside, even though the ornate walls, arches and stage appear somewhat ominous, the brothers are convinced they have reached what they think is their sanctuary of the moment. But, in fact, what they have entered is something altogether different.

Noted Felipe Fernandez, set decorator on FROM DUSK TILL DAWN, "It was a great opportunity to really come up with something original because [Quentin Tarantino's] script is very vague about the details of this main set, which is a stripper bar and whore house south of the border in Mexico. [Cecilia Montiel, the production designer] is Peruvian and has spent a lot of time in Mexico and has done a lot of research on Mayan architecture and culture.

"So that became a jumping off point for her. And what she

has in fact done, is given the storyline of [FROM DUSK TILL DAWN] context. She has provided a great deal of backstory as to who these vampires are and what they're all about. And, she also came up with the idea that this is not just a bar, it's a temple on top of an ancient pyramid that's buried in the ground."

Although a lot of the architectural inspiration of this movie has been based on the Mayan culture, the truth is that the Mayan civilization was not really germane to the supposed location of the Titty Twister. But the designers never set out to make an historically correct statement in their set designs. They chose instead to use various elements from both the Mayan and the Aztec traditions and create a new vision of the underworld of vampirism in Mexico.

"I think, in the creative process, that there's always an element of struggle," said Fernandez. "Pushing yourself. And

I think that insecurity is a part of that process. But actually it's a really great script. It's very strong and it's driven with a lot of great dialog. But Quentin didn't seem to focus in on the look of something or what color it was. He just sort of left that element out.

"[The script] describes signage and creates a Latin influence but there's nothing really describing the architecture or any other kind of detail about the history of the vampire or why they're here or how they're here or how long they've been here. As I read the script, it just seemed like some roadhouse sleaze joint. I think Cecilia's done a fabulous job of bringing a whole other element into it, which takes it beyond. You'll see, when you look at the film, that it has all the elements of this being a road house but there is this whole other element added to it."

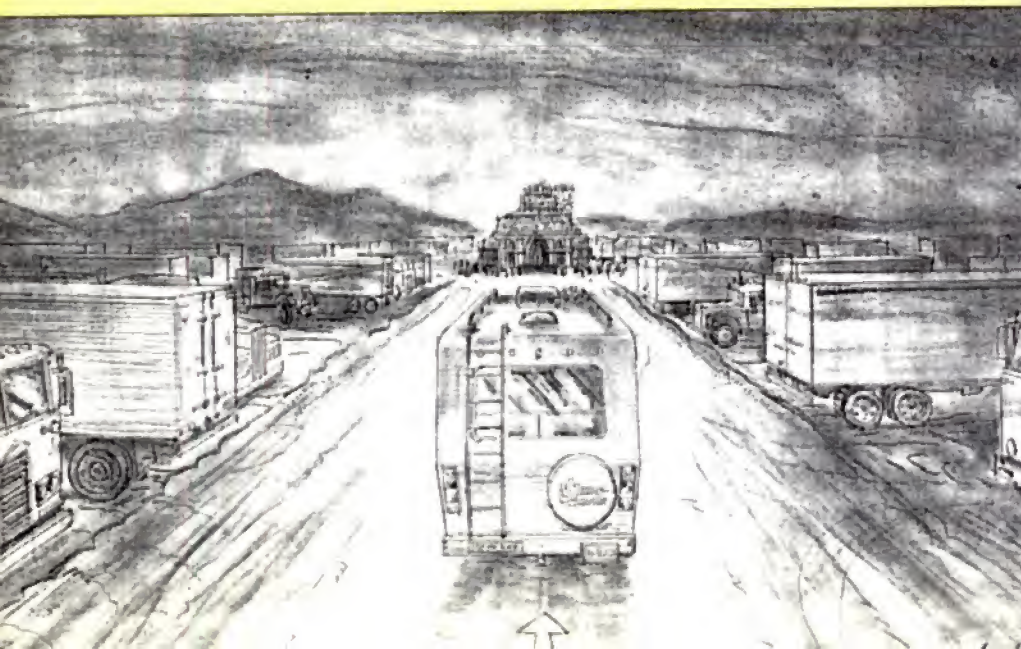
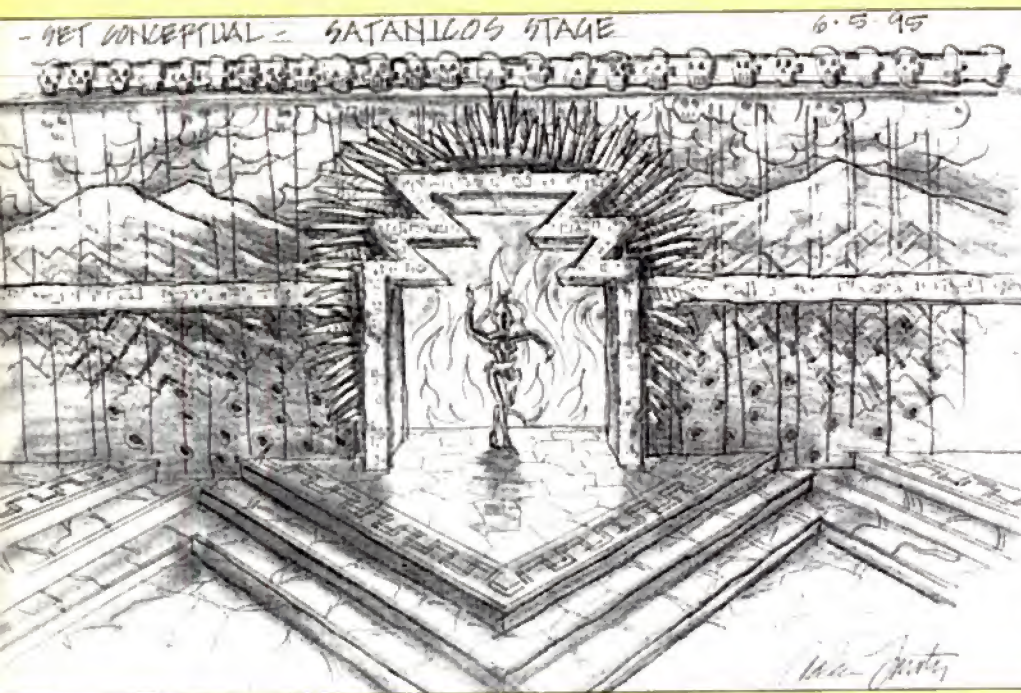
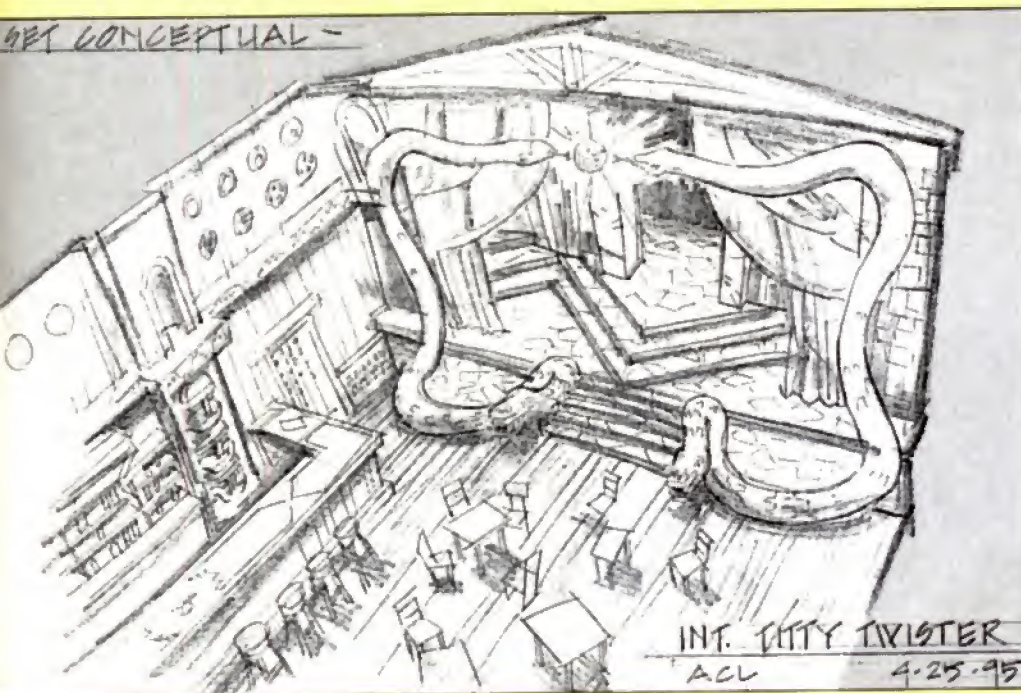
Part of that "other element" meant creating an environment that was a living, burning ember

of evil that would envelope and then devour any unsuspecting soul that could be lured into it's domain. The idea was that the vampires were simply doing the bidding of the demonic force that was housed in the pyramid, which the Titty Twister is built upon. So, the buildings and structures in this movie represent facades that attempt to hide the fact that you have stumbled upon the gateway into the blood-thirsty realm of organic annihilation.

"After [the movie] has spent 40 minutes in and around this bar, a couple of the characters finally escape," said Fernandez, who worked on a number of the giant Nike murals that were painted all over Los Angeles for the 1984 Olympics. "We see them ride off and the camera pulls back to what will actually be a map painting, with a very small inserted live-action shot of the driveway with the motor home on it and the rest will be a painting on glass. The pull back will then reveal this huge scene, which is this giant pyramid, with a ravine or a pit behind it. Something that is completely invisible from the front approach of the bar.

"And what this painting does is it kind of lets us know that this is not just a single night, this is not just a one-time event. But this is probably something that they do all the time and have been doing for hundreds, maybe thousands, of years." □

Design sketches by assistant art director Adam Lustig of the truck-stop exterior and interior stages of the Mayan temple of horrors.



## EXPLODING BLOODSUCKERS

**“The vampires are filled with green goo and it goes flying all over the place,” said pyrotechnician Tom Bellissimo. “Nobody wants to be in here. It’s loud and gooey.”**

KNB dummies of the vampires and we loaded them up with primercord and other explosives,” explained Bellissimo. “What basically happens is the sun comes in from the bullet holes [the Gecko brothers] have shot into the walls, the sun streams in and when it hits [the vampires], flames shoot out of them, they totally disintegrate and then explode.

“We’re using high explosives and that’s why we don’t have anybody inside here when we’re doing this. Yesterday we blew up all the band members, as you can see over there and today we’re blowing up four different vampires on the steps on this set over here. The vampires are filled with green goo and it goes flying all over the place. So nobody wants to be in here anyhow! It’s very loud and very gooey.”

Bellissimo went on to detail the dynamics of each explosion that they do on the set. “We have the camera operators come inside here and then [director] Robert [Rodriguez] comes in and sets up the shot,” said Bellissimo, who admits that his father used to sell fireworks illegally when he was growing up in Brooklyn. “We then put the vampire dummies where they are supposed to be, in a good position, making sure we put the light on them right to wherever we’re going to put the flames coming out of their chests.

“Then after everybody leaves and we’ve got everything ready, we make sure the set is clear. Then the camera guys put the cameras on, they walk briskly out of this room and then we yell out 3 - 2 - 1 and push two buttons. The first button causes flames to come out of the chest or out of the mouth or out of the head, wherever the sunbeam happens to be going. And the second button we push immediately after is just a high

explosive that explodes the dummy and sends it 360 degrees all over the room, with goo flying out of the back.”

Watching Bellissimo, you can tell he loves his work. But you can also tell that he respects the dangerous aspects of handling high explosives in a confined area. He is even more cautious when his stunts and effects involve people. “We did a bunch of stuff where we had flames all over the place coming up half-way to the ceiling,” said Bellissimo. Every time one of these vampires gets staked, they sort of hang out for a few beats and then they catch on fire.”

Quentin Tarantino surveys the carnage and contemplates his next career move. First, he is looking with earnest to some long overdue rest so that he can once again reconnect with those he loves. And hopefully in the process begin to court another passionate flame, with the intent of falling madly in love

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Quentin Tarantino as Richard Gecko gets stabbed in the hand by bar fighter Razor Charlie (Danny Trejo).



# THEODORE R

## Whoopi Goldberg teams up with futuristic

By Todd French

A Jurassic cop stakes out his own personal pre-hysterical beat on the bad streets of a future-mythic metropolis this winter as New Line Cinema presents THEODORE REX, a serio-comic Stone Age "noir fairytale" opening nationwide on December 22, starring Whoopi Goldberg. The film, described as a "dinosaur's coming-of-age fable," directed by Jonathan Betuel (MY SCIENCE PROJECT) wrapped its tight 58-day shooting schedule in Los Angeles last February, and includes a cast rounded out by Armin Mueller-Stahl, Richard Roundtree, Pons Maar, Bruce Lanoil, Juliet Landau and Peter Mackenzie.

"The setting is basically 'once upon a time in the future...' in a storybook world of Good and Evil," said Betuel. "Yet at the same time, the film's very much rooted in reality; it's an action picture, but with a taste of THINGS TO COME. The object was to tell kind of a spooky-comedic fable, a sort of coming-of-age story for a dinosaur, but blended with the elements of an action tale, which is a contradiction in itself. At the beginning of the film, a 'Scale,' as dinosaurs are called in the future, is murdered by a 'Soft-Skin' and Theodore Rex is called in to investigate."

Betuel, an avowed "dyno enthusiast" who penned the script two years ago, admitted that the impetus behind the project stemmed from his own fascination with the intrinsic allure of fairy tales and their ability to captivate young and old. However, combining Never Land frivolity with the hard-boiled elements of a mismatched-buddy cop-flick was not without vexing logistics. Said Betuel, "It's one thing to visualize a dinosaur on the corner of Venice and Robertson it's another to come up with a plausible society for them."

The film's "new centurion for a new century," described as a "walking, talking eight-foot-tall, three-ton, cookie-eating dinosaur as big and brave as any superhero," is the hero of Grid City, a sprawling future



Goldberg gets partnered with Teddy, an affirmative action program making him the first clone cop in Grid City, animatronics by Criswell Productions.

Los Angeles where all species co-exist under a benevolent rule of equality. In Betuel's scenario, Theodore Rex—and dino-mate Molly—are part of a saurian return movement, thanks to the efforts of clone-meister, Elizar Kane (Armin Mueller-Stahl), who resurrects the dynos in an attempt to put an acceptable face on cloning, thus paving the way for an even more ambitious and insidious plan for Grid City's inhabitants.

"Our hero, Theodore Rex, is the 'token dinosaur' that works for the Grid City police force," explained Betuel. "Grid City is a future metropolis; in effect, future cities have overgrown their boundaries, so you've got this massive grid of cities. At the start of the story, dinosaurs have been essentially recreated by the 'Henry Ford of cloning,' Elizar Kane, the film's villain, in an experiment to show cloning has no ill-effects for humanity. The result is that the dinosaurs that have been cloned are much smaller and have smaller brains. They start congregating and forming their own communities. The arc of the story centers around Theodore Rex who has a dream of becoming a cop. He gets into the police academy, and eventually gets assigned to a big murder case: the killing of a 'Scale' by a 'Soft-Skin.'"

"The commissioner assigns a street-wise cop known as a 'gun,' Katie Coltrane (Whoopi Goldberg), to be his partner. Katie is chagrined and derided by the other cops,

so an uneasy alliance is formed."

Betuel's praise for Goldberg, who plays the cynical, hardened Coltrane, is fairly glowing, in contrast to troubled reports of the actress' attempts to bolt the production. "Working with Whoopi was great," confirmed Betuel. "She's amazingly gifted, and she has an instinctive grasp of scenes. She's a collaborator, as well as a perfectionist, and she brought a lot of things. She would go over a line of dialogue and she would say, 'I can convey this with a look or a gesture, instead.' She has a way of lighting up a room, and she was always there—very patient."

Betuel illustrated his point by referring to a scene in which the comedienne's abilities to alleviate set tension were gratefully called in to play. "There was a scene with a dolly shot with Teddy that we were just not getting. We were having a problem getting Teddy's jaw to close. It turned out that we were filming next to this sheet metal quant hut. What it was doing in effect, was acting like an antennae, scrambling our remote-control signals, and sending Teddy into a kind of 'dead zone' every time we tried to get his jaw working. We must have gone through this for hours until we realized what was happening. During the entire time, Whoopi kept the entire crew amused, and she was a big help, both in front and in back of the camera."

Of course, pumping life into THEODORE REX's dynogumshoe was a considerable effort from the get-go, compounded by the lack of a margin for error necessitated by the film's extremely tight 58-day shooting schedule and the relatively slim (by Hollywood standards) \$10 million budget. But Betuel, who included a T-Rex as one of the highlights of his 1986 first feature, the teen time-warp flick, MY SCIENCE PROJECT, was fortunate in enlisting the top talents of lauded comic book artist-illustrator Bill Stout and FX whiz John Criswell. THEODORE REX's Cretaceous cast required 28 walkaround animatronic dinosaurs plus assorted effects. Yet leavening

# EX

## dinosaur cop.

the Terrible Lizards with ingratiating qualities was no mean feat, and Betuel extends no little praise to Stout on that score.

"Bill Stout was a lot of fun to work with," said Betuel. "He is one of the most facile illustrators I've ever seen. I called [production designer] Ron Cobb, with whom I had worked on my first film, MY SCIENCE PROJECT, and I asked him for the name of someone who really knew dinosaurs. He said there was only one call to make: Bill Stout. It was a definite challenge, designing Teddy and his girlfriend, Molly, but Bill delivered. How do you take a T-Rex, and make it warm and inviting as well as formidable? They are not carnivorous in the film, but very close. Then, once we had Teddy in perspective, we were faced with the task of designing his mate, Molly. If Teddy was going to be personable and warm, we had to make Molly even moreso."

Bringing the movie's myriad prehistoric protagonists into the future fell on the shoulders of effects artist, John Criswell. A 15-year industry veteran, with two years experience heading up the Jim Henson shop for the '92-'94 TV show, DINOSAURS, Criswell would seem a natural choice for tackling the movie's T-Rex couple. Assisted by his partner, Larry Finch, onset mechanic John Frassfrand and onset coordinator, Greg Johnson, Criswell settled on the logistics of making Teddy and Molly distinctive from the "tail-draggers" on the Henson show. For Theodore, Criswell would build a latex walkaround suit, the head supported by an aluminum stem rising four feet overhead, containing 32 servo-motors to articulate his face and head, enabling Teddy to display 47 points of movement on his face. The suit's movements are executed by a mime inside the suit, with small bladders beneath the latex, programmed by computers, either running a hard-wire or relying on radio-control, all controlled by a puppeteer at a console, 50 to 100 yards away, operating all 32 motors.

Said Criswell. "We made 28 walkaround animatronic dinosaurs plus assorted effects. Theodore was a walkaround



Jurassic cop: Goldberg trains Teddy in the use of firearms. Opening December 22, from New Line, the film is directed by dinosaur buff Jonathan Betuel, who helmed Disney's MY SCIENCE PROJECT.

suit. It was a tight job, and we really made it by the skin of our crew; it was hard because of the time, and trying to put together so many dynos in 55 days. That included everything from drawing to sculpting and from mold to casting. By the time I had an under-skull, I had one week to do the head. Still, with Theodore and Molly, we've got a full range of movement—eye dilation, rotation, brow movement, six top lip functions, nostril flares, double-hinged jaws and head movement."

"I would really like to mention my head painter, Mike McFarland, my sculptor Asuo Goto, and May and Marilee Canaga for putting all the suits together." While working on THEODORE REX, Criswell was juggling effects chores on POWER-RANGERS: THE MOVIE. Noted Criswell, "I think that the most challenging effect of all was insuring the geometry was correct on the suit, and making sure that it could be worn by a person. We used a lot of composite materials rather than aluminum. We also put together control stations so one puppeteer could operate all of the motors in Theodore's head."

Frenetic schedules are nothing new for

Criswell; the effects artist received his start in the industry under John Beuchler in 1980, and has fond memories of working under the gun for the low-budget Charles Band's Empire where "it was a lot of fun because we were working on three or four films at a time." Criswell's credits include SPACED INVADERS (1990), the pilot for BABYLON 5, the HBO film WITCH-HUNT, and the TEKWARS series. Miniatures, computer graphics, and matte paintings also rounded out the effects with Visual FX courtesy of Bob Habros and computer graphics by Todd AO.

Though a cursory glance of the plot of THEODORE REX might seem a bit uncomfortably close to another filmic interspecies whodunit set in a world of whimsical fantasy, WHO FRAMED ROGER RABBIT, Butuel hopes that the movie will appeal to both lovers of fabled tales of rites-of-passage, the slambang cop-meller crowd and dino lovers of all ages. With dinosaurs in boxoffice vogue these days, including a follow-up to JURASSIC PARK in the works and the ever-touted GODZILLA remake, it is hard to believe that cinemagoers are ever going to let the big lizards ever go monetarily extinct.

Said Butuel. "I really think filmgoers will love it. It has classic elements of Good vs. Evil, and a wonderful coming-of-age story. And it has a fine villain, too. The Prince of Darkness in THEODORE REX, Armin Mueller-Stahl's Kane, brings an aristocratic elegance to the role that's superb. Some of the dinosaur crowd scenes are awesome; we have three or four of them, including one of the dinosaurs at The Extinct Species Nightclub which is full of dynos dancing and at the bar that's just a knockout." □

Juliet Landau gets the drop on Teddy, the pawn in a conspiracy of sinister cloning experiments Betuel termed "a storybook world of Good and Evil."



# STAR TREK VOYAGER

**Paramount re-invents Gene Roddenberry's enduring sci-fi saga of space exploration.**

*By Dale Kutzera*

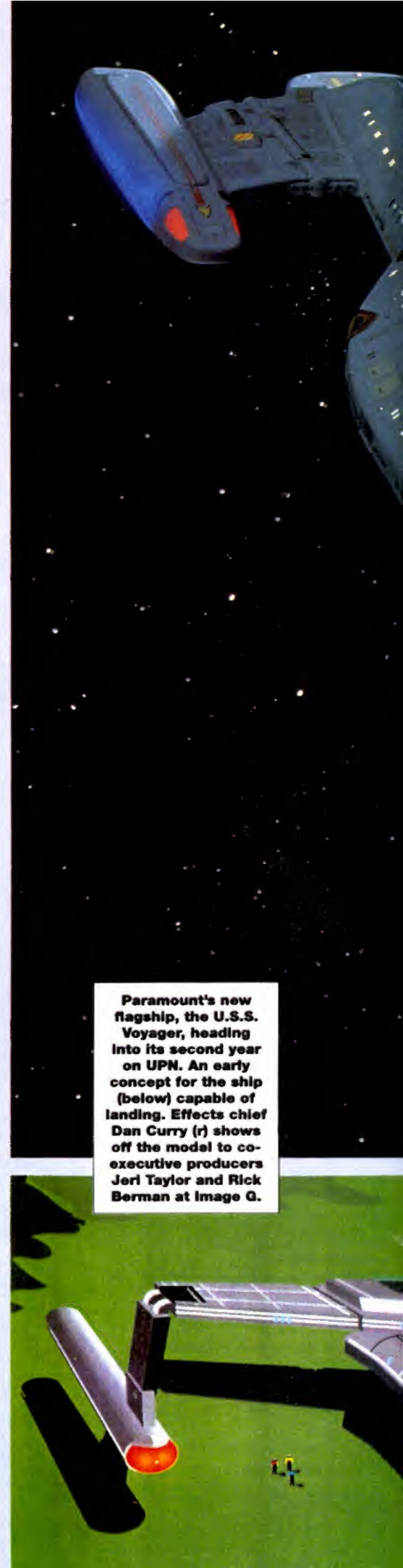
They make it look so easy: round up some actors, build some sets, put film in the camera and there you have it, a new STAR TREK series. Of course, if it were that simple, if finding the right blend of characters and premise, of writing and acting, of production design and special effects were child's play, then *Cinefantastique* would be publishing double issues on SEAQUEST DSV, EARTH II, VR5...you get the idea. The fact is, it isn't easy and while the creators of STAR TREK: VOYAGER have 30 years of STAR TREK experience to draw upon, the risks are still very high. During the year VOYAGER spent in development, every detail was thought through, every character hashed and rehashed, every premise debated and discussed. In doing so, the trio of creators have built what may be the most intriguing TREK of all, a compelling combination of the sea-faring adventure of the original series and the complex personalities of NEXT GENERATION and DEEP SPACE NINE.

DS9 had in fact been intended as TNG's replacement, but when Paramount noted that the STAR TREK audience would support two first-run series at the same time,

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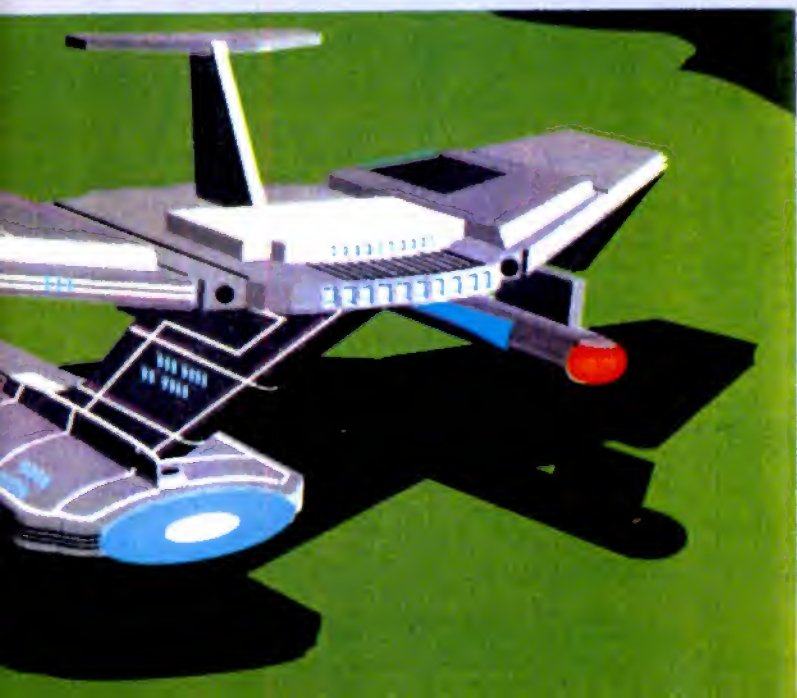
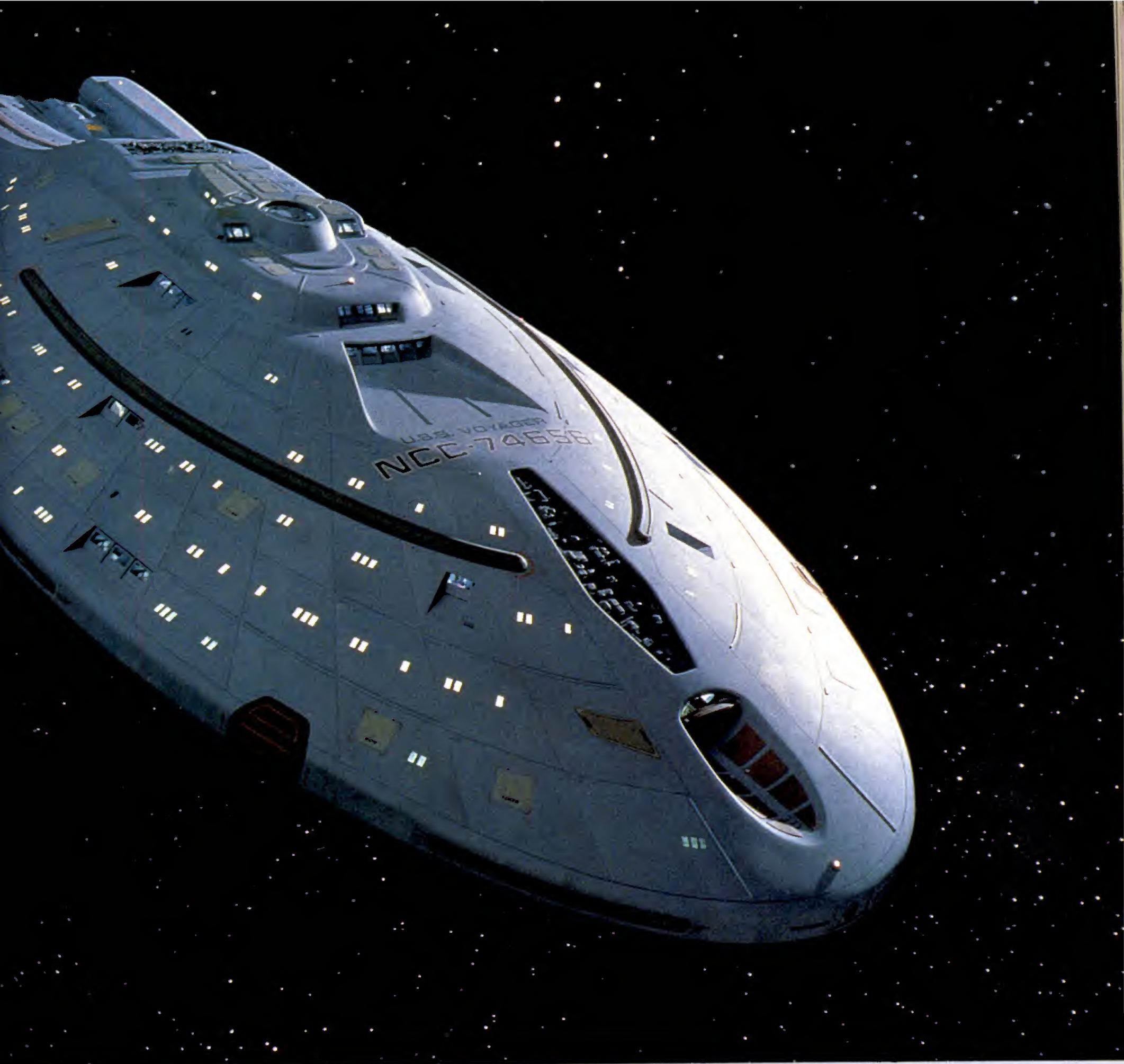


The ensemble cast, led by Kate Mulgrew as Captain Janeway, cast adrift in the uncharted space of the Delta Quadrant, heading for home.



Paramount's new flagship, the U.S.S. Voyager, heading into its second year on UPN. An early concept for the ship (below) capable of landing. Effects chief Dan Curry (r) shows off the model to co-executive producers Jeri Taylor and Rick Berman at Image G.





# VOYAGER GUIDE

By Dale Kutzera

## CARETAKER

★★★1/2

1/16/95. Production Numbers: 101 & 102. Stardate: 48315.6  
Written by Michael Piller and Jeri Taylor. Directed by Winrich Kolbe.

When a Maquis ship disappears in the dreaded Badlands, the *USS Voyager*, under the command of Captain Kathryn Janeway (Kate Mulgrew), is sent to find it. On board the lost ship is the *Voyager's* Vulcan security chief, Tuvok (Tim Russ), who has infiltrated the Maquis crew as an undercover spy. The *Voyager*, however, encounters the same mysterious energy wave that hit the Maquis ship and is blasted 70,000 light years to a distant part of the galaxy where they encounter the Caretaker, a highly evolved alien being who is caring for the gentle, but dependent Ocampa civilization. It seems the Caretaker, old and dying, has been searching the galaxy for living organisms similar to his own, with which he might perpetuate his race.

This two-hour premiere episode skillfully weaves together an action-packed story and the introduction of the nine regular cast members—no small feat. As if that's not enough, "The Caretaker" also introduces a handful of alien species, including the Ocampa and Kazon. It is in this central portion of the show that the story lags somewhat, as Ensign Kim and B'Elanna Torres find themselves in the idyllic Ocampa underworld, afflicted with a terrible disease. You can't knock the climax, however, as the visual effects team (led by visual effects producer Dan Curry) pulls out all the stops as the *Voyager* crew rescue their crewmen, fight off the villainous Kazon, and destroy the Caretaker array before it can fall into Kazon hands. This decision resigns Janeway and company to the central premise of the series: finding a new way home. I can only imagine, however, that other possible solutions to the predicament could have been devised by the crew given their circumstances. One of the difficulties in writing for STAR TREK must be the shifting level of plausibility within each story. A medical or technical break-through that saves the day one week, may be impossible the next in order to support the premise of the new show. In this case, couldn't a time-delayed explosive have been used, set to blow after the *Voyager* was sent home? Quibbles aside, "The Caretaker" is by far the most captivating TREK pilot since "The Cage" and "Where No Man Has Gone Before" of the original series.



Janeway returns via shuttlecraft to *Voyager* in "Parallax" and must choose the real ship from the ship's reflection in a quantum singularity.

members of the *Voyager* crew grow as Chakotay lobbies a doubtful Janeway to appoint Torres head of engineering. When the ship becomes trapped on the event horizon of a type-four quantum singularity, however, Torres may have the answer.

"Parallax" was one of the first concepts that we bought as we started into story development," said series co-creator Jeri Taylor. "It started as a really high-concept show right up Brannon Braga's alley, because it was some weird time distortion thing. Yet Brannon was able to write a script that I think made the crew struggle with 'We're out here and things are not working and what do we do? Who's going to be the Doctor and who's going to be the Chief of Engineering?' We were able to put in place the whole arc of B'Elanna and Janeway and so even though it felt high concept, it was very strongly rooted in character."

Noted scripter Brannon Braga, "Jim Trombetta has sold quite a few stories to me, real scientific concepts. The trick is turning them into good drama. You try to add an interesting dramatic spin, but it's always more difficult with a concept that is purely scientific. Although the quantum parallax is hard to grasp, (regretfully that's my fault) what I tried to do is come up with some interesting twists. His concept was that there was a ship trapped in a quantum singularity and how do we get it out? Which is a very cool idea. My only twist was that there is no ship; it's really us, and we've been trapped the whole time, we're just looking at a reflection, like being at the bottom of a lake looking up at the ice above. I thought that was kind of a cool thing. And there is the twist about seeing two *Voyagers* at the end. One is the reflection and one is real. Which one is which?"

"Normally, the way we write stories is we come up with what we want to do dramatically. For instance, in [TNG's] 'Cause and Effect' I wanted to do a show about a time leak where we repeat an act over and over. Did I know it was going to be called a 'causality loop' and that it had certain temporal properties? No, but I knew dramatically what would happen. We always prefer to do it that way. We add science later. And it works out much better that way. Though 'a quantum singularity' is a mouthful, I decided to use it anyway; but I literally could have called it 'a quantum fissure', 'a quantum sinkhole,' anything. And who cares? Who really cares?"

"It was more than a dream."

—Kes

## TIME AND AGAIN

★★★

1/30/95. Production Number: 104. Stardate: Not Given.  
Teleplay by David Kemper & Michael Piller. Story by David Kemper. Directed by Les Landau.

The *Voyager* encounters a gigantic shock wave, a debris cloud of polaric ions, that motivates the curious Janeway to investigate. With Paris (Robert Duncan McNeill), she finds a dead civilization, the victim of a catastrophic disaster. During the search on the planet surface, Paris passes through a time fissure that zaps him back several days earlier when the planet was a lush, growing civilization. Apparently the destruction was caused by the civi-

lization's use of polaric energy and the explosion has created residual sub-space fractures that send him and Janeway back in time. As Chakotay and the crew search for them, Janeway and Paris are caught up in a protest movement against the use of the unstable energy source (a clear commentary on the anti-nuclear movement of today).

"Time and Again" was a fascinating premise," said Taylor, "and also allowed Janeway and Paris to get off together alone and build another stepping stone in the bond between the two of them. It also showed some of Kes's emerging powers. She doesn't know quite what she's dealing with in this amazing brain of hers so she is on a quest and an exploration. Of course, since none of that episode happened she doesn't know any of that, but later on we have instances where she is coming up with some powers of perception that are unusual."

That's right, none of this happened. In the end, Janeway learns that the *Voyager's* presence—in particular Chakotay's rescue attempts—triggered the destruction in the first place. By preventing the rescue, the crew flashes back to the beginning of the episode, unaware of the events that will never happen. This twist on the notion of a time or causality loop is, perhaps, the most perplexing aspect of "Time and Again." Coming on the heels of "Parallax," another obtuse scientific premise, one wonders if the well of techno-macguffins is finally running dry.



Janeway (Kate Mulgrew) and Paris (Robert Duncan McNeill) in "Time and Again," a time-travel tale with an anti-nuclear message.

"I'm a doctor, Mr. Neelix, not a decorator."

—The Doctor

## PHAGE

★★★1/2

2/06/95. Production Number: 105. Stardate: 48532.4. Teleplay by Skye Dent and Brannon Braga. Story by Timothy DeHaas. Directed by Winrich Kolbe.

While searching for raw dilithium, Neelix is shot by a pair of mysterious aliens who extract his lungs. While the Doctor (Robert Picardo) stabilizes Neelix using a holographic lung, the crew pursues the alien ship into an asteroid. There they corner the aliens, a pair of ugly customers right out of TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE. It seems their once highly-developed race has been decimated by the disease known as the Phage, which forces them to harvest living organs and tissues from other beings in order to survive. As Neelix lungs have already been synthesized, the two aliens help Doc transplant one of Kes' lungs to Neelix.

"Phage" actually came out of our conceptual meetings," said Braga referring to the numerous brainstorming sessions held between the show's producers. "We were trying to come up with a group of interesting, new, scary aliens, and I think it was Jeri Taylor who brought up the Mayans; how incredibly sick, eccentric, and brutal we perceive them today, because of the human sacrifice and cannibalism that they engaged in. But, if you actually look at their culture and the reasons they did all of these things, many of them were very sensitive, and

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The *Voyager* held captive by the "Caretaker," in the series' two-hour pilot, the most captivating pilot since Roddenberry's original.

"I'm trying to help you. I'm sorry you can't see that."

—Chakotay

## PARALLAX

★★★

1/23/95. Production Number: 103. Stardate: 48439.7. Teleplay by Brannon Braga. Story by Jim Trombetta. Directed by Kim Friedman.

Conflicts between the Maquis and Federation

# STAR TREK VOYAGER

## FILMING THE SERIES PILOT

*The backstage adventure of the \$8 million show was almost equal to that seen on the screen.*

By Dale Kutzera

With both the future of the STAR TREK franchise and the successful launch of the United Paramount Network on the line, expectations were high for the two-hour pilot of STAR TREK: VOYAGER. The polished show that was viewed by over 12.4 million households last January 16th, however, betrayed none of the behind-the-scenes adventures that went into its production. An arduous casting process, delayed shooting schedule, and the rapid arrival and departure of actress Genevieve Bujold all made for a backstage adventure equal to that seen on screen.

Director Rick Kolbe's involvement with the pilot began with an appropriately high-tech phone call to Rick Berman in June. "I was in Georgia directing a two-hour IN THE HEAT OF THE NIGHT," Kolbe said. "We had just set up a shot when I got a call from the production assistant to give Rick Berman a call—it was urgent. I called his office, but by that time he had left, so I called his home and his wife gave me his mobile number. So I called him from my mobile phone to his mobile and the system really does work. He said, 'Rick, you're going to direct the pilot,' and I lifted up about 6 feet and then slowly hovered down again and said, 'Yes!'"

Berman told Kolbe he would start prepping on the 27th of June for a targeted production start date of August 15. Kolbe wrapped his IN THE HEAT OF THE NIGHT episode on the 15th, had a few days off, then reported to Paramount on the 27th. While the story he would be telling was finished, however, the script was still undergoing revisions. "We had really made the choice to make this an action-adventure kind of romp," said executive producer Jeri Taylor, one of the series three co-creators, along with executive producers Rick Berman and



Janeway and Neelix (Ethan Phillips) in "Caretaker," Mulgrew as Janeway was the last role to be cast after the well-publicized exit of Genevieve Bujold in the role.

Michael Piller. "Very late in the game, we felt that Janeway had a lot of brooding moments where she is a good captain, but that other side of her was being lost—that nurturing side, that sensitive side. And we felt it was important that be in the pilot as well. We wanted to make her different [than Picard]. Not to say anything against his character, but she is a different person."

To further demonstrate the differences between Janeway and past STAR TREK captains, and in turn the differences in the VOYAGER series, the producers sought to insert a key scene in which Janeway could reveal something of her personal character. The revelation came to Piller as he watched a

Fourth of July fireworks display at a party at Paramount Television Chairman Kerry McCluggage's home.

"We had written a version of the story which was pretty successful, but it was missing something," said Piller. "We were watching the fireworks at the Rose Bowl, and thinking about some of the notes that we had been given by the studio. I was sitting with Brannon Braga, and I said, 'You know, this really moves, but it doesn't have passion. Where is the passion going to come from? How do I make people understand what Janeway is feeling about what's happening to her crew and everything that is going on?'"

"I was talking about that with Rick [Berman], and Rick's wife, Liz, said 'Yeah, I didn't really feel that I got to know Janeway during the course of the script.' So I said, 'I don't know where we're going to do this, because the structure of this thing is so tight—and it's already long—but we're going to have to find passion and explain Janeway. Somehow, we're going to have to do it in one scene. And it probably will have to be a scene in which we understand from her how she feels about her responsibilities to get this crew home.'"

The scene is a quiet, human moment between Janeway and her friend and counsel of four years, Tuvok. In the three page scene, after discussing the peculiar atmosphere of the Ocampa world, Janeway expresses her concern for the missing Ensign Kim and the fate of her ship and crew in half a page of Piller's subtle dialogue:

JANEWAY

*Kim's mother called me just after he left Earth...a delightful woman, her only son...he'd left his clarinet behind...she wanted to know if she had time to send it...I had to tell her no...did you know he played the clarinet in the Juilliard Youth Symphony?*

## TUVOK

*I didn't have the opportunity to meet Mister Kim.*

## JANEWAY

*I barely know him. I never seem to have the chance to get to know any of them. I have to take more time to do that...it's a fine crew...and I've got to get them home...*

"I came in the next day after the Fourth of July weekend, and wrote that scene," said Piller. "It went through a variety of revisions, but it was what I like to call an empty-your-pockets scene for a character, where you pause and let the emotions that had been held in check finally spill out after an hour of action and adventure. It makes the audience care about that character a great deal more. She has finally allowed the surface to break away and give out everything that is going on inside of her. That comes from our wish to find some place that is different from the other characters that have been in command. Picard and Sisko are both very reserved. Kirk was a swash-buckling, wild fellow. Having a female Captain allowed us to have a more nurturing, warmer, open kind of leader. I think that has always been our goal and you have to write that into the part, naturally."

With the script complete, Kolbe and the production staff began pre-production, familiarizing themselves with the script, new VOYAGER sets under construction, and locations for the pilot. The LA Convention Center had already been selected as the underground world of the Ocampa. When Kolbe was shown photos of a potential farmhouse, however, he wanted to keep looking. Likewise, the various desert locals he was offered did not convey the empty expanse he was looking for. Finally, production designer Richard James showed Kolbe a tape of a TNG episode directed by Corey Allen. The desert location, El Mirage Dry Lake near Victorville, was perfect.

As the detailed planning for the August 15 start date progressed, Kolbe sat in on the numerous casting sessions underway. "I had about four days of prep and then we went into a half day mode—a half day of prep then every afternoon we went into casting. Day after day after day, which I hated. It's a necessary evil, but my prep behavior starts in the morning very slowly and I spend a lot of time walking through the sets or just walking outside, and then after lunch it clicks in. This



VOYAGER pilot director Winrich Kolbe, a veteran of both THE NEXT GENERATION and DEEP SPACE NINE, directing second season DS9's "Armageddon Game."

was like *coitus interruptus* because the moment I was able to creatively figure out a scene, I was off to casting."

Like Sisyphus pushing the giant rock up the hill, the production team struggled to cast each part. August arrived and the *Voyager* still had no captain. The August 15th start date was pushed back. "We pushed it back a week, and another week, and then a third week," said director Winrich Kolbe. Still no captain. The right actress simply couldn't be found and the producers even started auditioning a handful of men for the part, which would have required gender adjustments to the rest of the cast. Finally, their search was over with word that the French-Canadian actress Genevieve Bujold was interested.

Bujold was hired without a reading and immediately rushed into makeup and wardrobe. "There are a lot of preparations," explained Garrett Wang, who plays Ensign Kim. "Wardrobe fittings, making sure your hair is right. Hair is very important on STAR TREK. It has to be just the right way or it's back to the drawing board. I went through two or three haircuts and there is nothing intricate about my hair, although I've been told by fans that they like my hair the best. Basically when you get in here you're getting tugged and pulled at the seams left and right. Get into this suit, make sure you work out and don't have a gut, make sure your hair and teeth meet these specifications, all kinds of things like that. That's what makes the show work. The attention to detail that Rick Berman puts into it is incredible. Rick is the great overseer. There is no other show that has the attention to detail STAR TREK does. It's a very hygienic, seamless show. Every hair is in place."

As Bujold was tugged and pulled, she requested her character's name be changed. This followed a change the producers had already made from Elizabeth to Catherine, when Elizabeth Janeway failed to clear Paramount's legal department. "Genevieve wanted the name Nicole," said Piller. "Considering the O.J. situation, we were not sure that was a great idea, but I think we went along with it." Meanwhile, the rest of the *Voyager* crew sat down together for the first time at a lunch hosted by Berman, Piller, and Taylor.

"The main thing the producers talked about was the fact that some of us will be asked to do certain publicity things and others will not and that's just going to be arbitrary," said Tim Russ, who plays Tuvok. "Bob Picardo has hosted some things. Duncan McNeill hosted some things. Myself, Chakotay, and the Captain had a feature cover picture on *TV Guide*. So everyone has had things spread out and they didn't want us to think there was a lot of favoritism or isolation."

"They told us our acting must be a little more reserved," said Wang. "It can't be over-the-top acting. Usually TV acting is a little bit bigger than film, but if we play too big that suddenly makes the aliens unreal. You just have to look at something and people will pick it up. Then we went right into [shooting]. There was no extensive formal lecture or book on how to be a STAR TREK regular."

Each cast member worked on their own in developing their character. Tim Russ, already a STAR TREK fan, studied up on Vulcan behavior and mannerisms. Roxann Biggs-Dawson familiarized herself with Klingon lore. Almost everyone reviewed episodes of TNG to gain a feel for how the actors moved and interacted with control panels, turbo-lifts, and viewscreens. "We did not have any rehearsal time to speak of," said Piller. "We didn't even have a read-through on that show."

"We're used to that," said Kolbe. "You do episodic TV and you get actors and actresses that walk in cold. Due to financial considerations, everybody is being brought in at the last possible moment, usually a day too short for everything to get together. I tend to throw them into the water and let them swim, because you don't really have that much time. The nice thing about good actors is that as a director you really just have to sit there and listen. They will tell you what to do because they will figure out what's in that scene. If they go wrong then you might give them some indication where you want to have it start and where you want to end it. Other than that my method is to let them develop it. I believe that whoever is driving the scene will lead us around and the camera will follow."

During Bujold's day-and-a-half of shooting, on September 8th and 9th, two scenes



Michael Piller, pilot scripter and co-exec producer.



The exciting climax of "Caretaker" as Paris, Kes, Kim, Torres and Neelix race to escape the Ocampo world before its destruction, filmed on location at El Mirage Dry Lake, near Victorville, California.

were filmed, the first in which Janeway brings Paris and Wang onto the bridge, and then the crucial scene with Tuvok in her ready room. "I don't want to say tense, but it was not really comfortable and easy and relaxed," said Tim Russ. "It was not there, not happening, no chemistry. And it was clear that she was not enjoying the process, not in charge of the character, and that's exactly what read on screen. She was not in command of the ship and didn't want to be in command of the ship. She is a method actress and she needs to work on a feature film in a contemporary, reality-based story with three months to shoot a page and a half of dialogue a day. It's not going to happen with a science fiction show that shoots in seven days and where you've got to be a machine."

In Bujold's hands, Janeway became more scientist than captain. Try as he might, Kolbe could not coax from her the kind of command authority he felt the part demanded. Finally, he resorted to shooting multiple takes of each set-up, printing the best, understanding that the producers would see in dailies the number of takes he was shooting—often upwards of 20—and the problem with Bujold's interpretation of Janeway.

Then it happened. In the middle of shooting, Bujold told Kolbe she wanted to quit. The trio of executive producers visited Bujold in her trailer and by the time they left, the actress had resigned from the show. "I look at this business as an adventure more or less," said Piller. "This was just the last of a series of calls that week with Genevieve, who is a charming and extremely dedicated professional, but totally unprepared for television and what it demands—and she would be the first to tell you that. It got to a point where we [the producers] sort of looked at each

other, and raised our eyebrows, and traipsed down there. You wondered what it was going to be this time. And what it was, was: 'Look, I made a mistake, I really can't do this. Is there a car that can take me home?' And by the time we got to that meeting, we all knew that it was not a bad thing that she was suggesting, and we said, 'God bless, good luck.' We were concerned that the studio would not feel the same way and that there might be some legal ramifications, because a lot of money was spent on the days of shooting when she was involved. To this day, I don't know if there is anything going on or not. But I can tell you that, in terms of the people working on the show, the success of the show, and the cast, it was a blessing."

Recalled Kolbe, "After they came out and the word was given that she was leaving the show I went back to the office in a van. I remember the feeling rather distinctly. It was the same feeling that I had in my stomach and in my system that I had after a combat mission in Vietnam. All the adrenaline is suddenly gone, it's empty. It's a very weird, almost sick feeling in your stomach, because you're still alive."

With the departure of Bujold the produc-

Kate Mulgrew as Janeway introduces Kim (Garrett Wang) and Paris (Robert Duncan McNell) on the bridge, a scene reshot after Bujold's hasty departure.



**“Kirk was a wild swashbuckler. Picard and Sisko are both very reserved. Janeway allowed us to have a nurturing leader.”**

**—Producer Michael Piller—**

tion lurched to an abrupt halt. As the producers once again began the casting process, the male cast members held their collective breath. "When they lost Genevieve, they started looking again. They saw every woman. They even saw men," said Garrett Wang. "At that point, I thought it could be anybody. And if it was a man, Chakotay could be changed, Harry Kim could be changed, anybody could be changed. So it was a very tense time for all the male characters. Sitting there, going, 'Am I going to get it?'"

Kolbe and the production crew devised a week of shooting around the Captain. "Merri Howard, the line producer, David Livingston, the supervising producer, assistant director Jerry Fleck, and myself immediately went to work trying to figure out a schedule to keep shooting for insurance purposes. Insurance would pay for any loss, but we had to prove to them we covered all our bases. So we put a week together figuring that in a week we would be able to find a replacement."

The replacement was Kate Mulgrew, who had auditioned first on video in New York, then again in Los Angeles for the producers. Four finalists were taken to the studio for a final audition, after which Mulgrew was given the job and rushed off to wardrobe to be costumed for a photo shoot for the cover of *TV Guide*. As he had done with Bujold, Kolbe took Mulgrew on a tour of the sets, a crash course in STAR TREK.

"I took her through the bridge, the ready room, the conference room, and I said, 'This is your living room. Control it just like you control your living room in your house. This is your bridge, you know where everything is, you walk with a purpose, everybody else will look at you, you are the focus. You don't sit down unless you are very very tired. You move around. You lead the camera. I have wheels on the camera and a damn good camera operator. I'm going to follow you wherever you go.' She just listened as I explained what all the stations were and it must have worked, because from the first moment she came on the bridge she went right to the spot she had to be in."



Garrett Wang as Ops/Comm Officer Harry Kim, in the care of Ocampa experimenters in "Caretaker." Noted Wang of Genevieve Bujold's brief stint as Janeway, "It was very low key and very quiet."

To Tim Russ, who would perform the ready-room scene again with this new Captain, the difference was night and day. "The first scene we shot was on the bridge, and from the time she walked out in rehearsal it was clear; this was the captain. Every person, every crew person standing on the set knew she was the Captain. When it comes to TV and film 80% of casting is personality and she is in real life the same way. Kate is in charge, she doesn't put up with any nonsense, very stern, straightforward, short sometimes, and she knows her stuff. Her acting chops are all together. She doesn't mess up in dialogue very often either. It's almost like she's a recording device and it's very difficult to keep up with her in some cases."

Added Wang, about his Captain, "She's very well-spoken. Carries herself well. And she's got charisma. That's half the battle right there. It makes it a lot easier to work with a buddy."

Wang performed some remarkable imitations of Bujold and Mulgrew to illustrate the differing styles the actresses brought to the role. "She [Mulgrew] did the same scene that Genevieve did, the one where she introduces me on the bridge, and everything. With Genevieve it was almost like there was a reservation when she was speaking her lines. It was very low key and very quiet. It was just like, [whispering] 'It's not crunch time yet, Mr. Kim.' And she'd walk away, very quiet and Genevievish, and then she sat down in her chair and she was like, [whispering even more quietly] 'En-gaaage.' It was really very light. That was her choice as an actress, and it's not a wrong choice, but the power behind what was needed was not there. It was more of an intense power than an all-out, commanding power. Kate just

came in and said, 'Its not crunch time yet, Mr. Kim!' And she comes around, "EN-GAGE!" Whoosh, boom—and we were all happy. And that was that."

With the Captain on board the 31-day shooting schedule of the pilot continued in relative calm. Through the long hours of shooting, the cast bonded into a cohesive whole. "You could say that the first week or so was a rehearsal since we went back and reshot a great deal of it," said Piller. "This cast of characters just came together as an ensemble when Kate came on. It's as simple as that. Once the power, once the anchor was in place, once the chain of command, if you will, was clear, everybody knew where their positions were in relationship to this Captain. She came in and gave it stability; and that's what makes an ensemble work."

Noted Robert Picardo, who plays Doc, "We're so fortunate to have someone like Kate who is such a talented actress and intelligent performer. It's a lot of work being the Captain. So many of the early stories focused entirely on her. She had huge responsibilities dialogue-wise, and if you have an actor there who does not want to work hard and doesn't

Tim Russ as Tuvok in Janeway's ready room, a key scene that Bujold filmed before her departure. Said Russ, "Mulgrew had her acting chops together."



**“The first scene we shot was on the bridge, and from the time [Kate Mulgrew] walked out in rehearsal it was clear this was the Captain.”**

—Tim Russ, *Tuvok*—

want to be there that is going to make everyone's life miserable. When Kate got this job, she embraced it and ran with glee from the moment she hit the ground. It has been a joy thus far shooting the show. Like this great cloud of uncertainty has been lifted and replaced with someone who really wanted to be at the helm and it's made all the difference."

Wang looked back on the pilot as the most draining experience of his life. Of the 31-day shooting schedule, he was involved in 29 of them, tying Robert McNeill for the most days worked. "We're talking, 'Okay, it's 11 p.m., be back here at four,' things like that. It was so tough for me to get into that mode of just work-work-work, because, as an actor you spend most of your life pursuing a job, as opposed to having a job. And so, once you have it and you're working as hard as you can, and you try to 'stay up,' you have to keep your health going. I got sick toward the end. I was very sick the day that we filmed on the stairwell, where I was supposed to be dying, and I thought, 'Hey, this is perfect.'"

The long hours and hard work payed off, however, when the cast and crew gathered in Paramount's large theater for the world premiere screening of the pilot. Not even one of the largest storms in recent Los Angeles history could keep away the overflow crowd of artists, craftsman, studio executives, and journalists. "The first time we got to see it was the premiere," said Wang. "No one saw it before that. It was the first time that we got to see other people's work, other than the times that we were on the bridge. And that was just exposition. I really enjoyed seeing all of the other people. I was out of my chair laughing so hard at Neelix's scene. The scene with Paris and Chakotay on the collapsing stairwell was by far the most entertaining scene for me. They're both about to fall to their deaths, and they are carrying on this little repartee. You had tension, you had drama, and you had this humor going on. And at the end, everyone was walking up to each other, 'Congratulations! Great work!' It was really nice to get a pat on the back." □

# STAR TREK VOYAGER

## NICOLE JANEWAY

*The story of Genevieve Bujold's brief tenure as Voyager captain.*

By Dale Kutzera

The producers of VOYAGER were delighted to land Genevieve Bujold as their Captain. "We jumped up and down," said executive producer Jeri Taylor. "Oh boy, a famous feature actress, Academy Award nominee, this is outstanding. I've seen her work in which she was powerful and passionate and intense. So we hired her without reading her, something I vowed never to do, but she is an actress who works in a very specific way and auditioning was not part of her process so in order to get her, we waived that."

Winrich Kolbe, director of the VOYAGER pilot, speculated that Bujold was poorly counseled into taking the part, and unaware of the rigors of episodic television production. But executive producer Rick Berman was careful to spell them out to her in great detail. "On the day we decided to cast her, Berman called her and laid out exactly the grueling schedule of episodic TV," Kolbe said. "New directors—you want to get used to a director, forget it. Long, long hours. Publicity stunts. Script pages coming in the night before. Script pages coming in hours before you start doing a scene. If you cannot maintain that pace, let us know before we sign on the dotted line.' So she thought about it, called him back and said, 'I'm going to do it. I'm right for the show.' Everything was set to go and then it just went *poof*."

The cast's first encounter with their Captain occurred when they were given a tour of the sets by the producers and Kolbe. Even then, the cool, retiring presence of Genevieve Bujold was unnerving to many. "She was very quiet, very to herself," said Garrett Wang,



Bujold in director Alan Rudolph's *TROUBLE IN MIND*, unprepared for the rigors of series television.

who plays Ensign Kim. "She didn't say anything to anybody. She was cordial, but nothing beyond that. I have good luck opening up people who seem closed, so I smiled and said, 'It's nice to have you here, Genevieve.' She said, 'Thank you,' assessing me for a minute or two to see whether or not I was a person she could talk to. I said, 'So, how's it going?' and she said, 'It's rushed, hard to get a feeling of trust going.'"

"It wasn't that bad," said Kolbe. "When she came in on the first day she distributed roses to all of us.

I thought it was wonderful, and then...well, there was tension, but it was a silent tension. This is a pilot after all, you don't know what your getting into. The crew had worked together for years so it was very quiet. We knew we had a problem, but we are professionals and we get paid a lot of money to make sure we solve those problems. The first day went very silently."

Noted Wang, "She wasn't letting loose. She was doing her scenes, but when it was done and she wasn't needed, she bolted back to her trailer. There was no on-set camaraderie going on."

Kolbe soon got an uneasy feeling about his star. "I knew something was not working and she wasn't right," said Kolbe. "Whatever I tried didn't work so I just ran take after take. Bujold was too soft, not in control and she told me she didn't want to be Captain Janeway, she wanted to be a scientist. I said, 'Well, that runs counter to what we're doing here. She is a scientist, but she is also captain of the ship and you are in a command position.'

"Shortly before lunch on Friday, we were setting up a shot in the ready room with her and Tuvok when she suddenly stood next to



Kate Mulgrew as VOYAGER's Captain Kathryn Janeway, who stepped into the role after Bujold bowed out after just two days of shooting the pilot.

me and said, with a rather loud voice, 'I don't think I'm right for this part.' I looked at her and said, 'Don't ever say that in front of the crew, please.' Then Jerry Fleck, my assistant director, came to me and suggested we break the actors for lunch. So she went to lunch and I stood there trying to figure out what to do, then decided to talk to her.

"I went into her trailer and we talked for about a half hour. She kept telling me that she couldn't do it, that it wasn't her, that she didn't want to do it. I reiterated that she is—and I still believe that she is—a tremendous actress and she would have been able to do it, but I sensed that she didn't want to do it. So I said, 'You understand that I have to talk to the studio now and I'm sure somebody will contact you very soon.' I figured at that time it was over and I called Rick Berman and said, 'Rick, you better get your people down here and talk to her, because I have a feeling we don't have a Captain Janeway.'"

"It became clear early on that she was accustomed to features where there is more time and where the actor can be shielded from the world," said Taylor. "She didn't want to talk to the press, she was going to give no interviews, no photographs, she didn't want photographers on the set. We had to explain there were needs here other than hers. So she said, 'This has been a terrible mistake.' I am grateful to her that she did it after a day and a half. Had more time gone on we would have been in deep trouble." □



Michael Westmore's neatly gruesome makeup for "Phage," an example of the dark touch that distinguishes VOYAGER from TNG and DS9.

done for cultural, intellectual, philosophical, or religious reasons. Even though it is a horrifying culture, you really need to look beyond the blood and the guts to see that there is something going on.

"So I started thinking: wouldn't it be interesting if the bubonic plague in ancient Europe had never ended. What would Europe have become? Well, almost certainly, humans would have persevered, but they might have had to live with the debilitating plague. What if it had continued that way for thousands of years? What kind of culture would exist? That's basically the Phages. They have been living with a horrible, cellular, chomping Phage through thousands of years, and now their whole culture and technology revolves around pure survival; gathering replacement organs and skin. So they look horrible, but then you talk to them, and you realize that they are incredibly cultural, sophisticated, and articulate."

The alien victims of the Phage, later dubbed the Vidiians, are by far the ugliest makeups ever created by Michael Westmore (that's meant as a compliment). The dark nature of the entire story goes a long way toward establishing the strange, mysterious tone that distinguishes VOYAGER from TNG and DS9. Visual effects coordinator Joe Bauer supervised the effects, including the Tholian web-like hall of mirrors at the climax. Fans will also note the Bones McCoy phraseology by the Doctor. "When I read that script I just thought it was a joke," said Robert Picardo of Brannon Braga's homage. "Then I was told on the set this is a Bones line. I guess I remember him saying lines like that." Could it be that Bones McCoy is one of the doctors whose accumulated knowledge has been programmed into the Doctor? "That idea has been floated, believe it or not," said Picardo.

"Maybe more than ever now they need me to be larger than life. I only wish I felt larger than life."  
—Janeway

### THE CLOUD ★★★

2/13/95. Production Number: 106. Stardate: 48546.2. Written by Michael Piller. Story by Brannon Braga. Directed by David Livingston.

Hoping for a new source of energy to replace the *Voyager's* waning reserves, Janeway explores an unusual nebula emitting a high level of omicron particles. When the *Voyager* is caught inside, however, she is forced to blast her way through a barrier to escape. Further study reveals that the nebula was in fact an unknown life form and their escape has caused it serious injury. Risking the safety of ship and crew, Janeway once again enters the creature to affect repairs.

Reminiscent of the "The Immunity Syndrome" episode of the original series, in which the *Enterprise* encounters a giant amoeba, "The Cloud" displays the kinder, gentler sensibilities of the 1990's. Where Kirk and company sought to destroy the threatening protozoan, Janeway risks it all to put the "cloud" back together.

"Michael [Piller] took that script over to rewrite it," said Taylor. "There wasn't a whole lot of story there. They get caught in this thing. They think it's a nebula and then discover it's something alive and we gotta heal it. That doesn't fill up five acts so I think he just started, in his zen way, writing things that were fun and wonderful. It was a story that lent itself to do that. A more intricately plotted story might not let you get away with that."

"We wanted to retain basically the upbeat, positive approach toward the future that was characterized by THE NEXT GENERATION, but we also decided not to take ourselves so damn seriously. This situation would force Janeway to try to be closer to her crew. She didn't have the luxury, in the conditions they were in, to be remote from them. So she's already out playing pool with the guys and strolling around making friends. Those are tonal changes that we decided upon in order to make it a little more buoyant."

The strength of "The Cloud" lies in the character gems woven throughout the plot. We learn more about Paris and Kim, including an introduction to a French pool hall that Paris has created on the holodeck; more about Neelix's anxieties and Kes' sense of adventure; and more about Chakotay and his knowledge of the subconscious world as he introduces Janeway to her spirit guide, a lizard (why was I expecting a fox?). Most notable is Janeway's arc. She is concerned about what the crew needs from her: a stoic larger-than-life leader, or a friend? By the end she has made her decision, shooting pool with the crew. Contrast this with the fact that Picard didn't play poker with Riker and the others until the last episode of TNG. In short, "The Cloud" is more about the people than the adventure. It's not something a self-proclaimed adventure show can do every week, but every so often it's refreshing to spend time with these people in a casual atmosphere, when the shields aren't buckling, and the warp core isn't about the breach.



Voyager gets stuck in "The Cloud," a living entity, an episode graced with wonderful character moments written by Michael Piller.

"It seems we were so close."  
—Janeway

### EYE OF THE NEEDLE ★★★1/2

2/20/95. Production Number: 107. Stardate: 48579.4. Teleplay by Bill Dial and Jeri Taylor. Story By Hilary J. Bader. Directed by Winrich Kolbe.

The crew of the *Voyager* finds a possible way home when they encounter a small wormhole leading to the Alpha Quadrant. A probe is sent through the small opening and serves as a communications link to the other side, leading to an extended dialogue with Telek (sympathetically played by Vaughn Armstrong), the captain of a Romulan science vessel. At first suspicious, Telek eventually allows himself to be beamed aboard the *Voyager*. In a wonderful twist of events, it turns out that the wormhole has cut through time as well as space: Telek's ship exists 20 years in the past.

"Hilary Bader has given us a lot of wonderful stories," said Taylor. "That story was one of the ear-



Telek (Vaughn Armstrong) a Romulan from the Alpha Quadrant beams aboard in "Eye of the Needle," taking a message to the Federation.

ly ones we bought. I ended up doing a rewrite on it. The show was fully realized, one of those shows that had a little of everything in the right proportions. I think it's the first time we felt the loneliness of those people stuck way out there and how important it is to them to find a way home, then how cruel that is to snatch it away and be able to do it in a way that people didn't see coming. I think there were wrinkles in it that were unexpected."

"The Eye of the Needle" drags on a bit during the slow give-and-take between Janeway and Telek, and during the tests of an experimental transporter system. One exchange is staged entirely in Janeway's quarters, with the Captain wearing a negligee, and serves as a perfect example of Kate Mulgrew's ability to command a scene, yet remain entirely feminine. I have a small problem with the plausibility of the ending, in which Tuvok informs Janeway that their records show Telek died before he would have passed on the messages for the crew. If Tuvok knew this, why not ask Telek (without divulging the man's fate) to entrust the messages to the Romulan government, thereby ensuring their delivery?

"Her eyes were a million kilometers away, staring at stars I had just flown by the day before."  
—Paris

### EX POST FACTO ★

2/27/95. Production Number: 108. Stardate: Not Given. Written by Evan Carlos Somers and Micheal Piller. Directed by LeVar Burton.

After a series of strong, intriguing stories, *Voyager* takes its first stumble with this clumsy, boring homage to the murder-mysteries of Raymond Chandler. Paris is convicted of murdering the wife of a prominent scientist and is sentenced to relive his crime through the eyes of the victim. This interesting punishment, however, is hardly sufficient to base a story around. Writers Somers and Piller fail to raise this scenario to the humorous, kitschy level of, for instance, "A Piece of the Action," the original series episode in which Kirk, Spock, and McCoy play 1930's gangsters, or the wonderful episode of MOONLIGHTING "The Dream Sequence Always Rings Twice" which was filmed entirely in black and white.

"It was Michael's idea to do that episode as a film noir," said Jeri Taylor. "In retrospect, I'm not so sure that was a good idea, which is something we've talked about. This is Michael's favorite episode, [but] not one of my favorites. To me it was somehow a violation of the concept that we are out in a strange part of space, we don't know what we're going to encounter, there are different kinds of aliens out there and where do we arrive? On a planet that sort of looks like Earth and has suburban housewives, dogs, smoking, and people talking like they came out of a Raymond Chandler novel. That seems to me not to be the right thing conceptually, although I think there was a lot of fun to be had in

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# STAR TREK VOYAGER

## CAPTAIN KATHRYN JANEWAY

*Kate Mulgrew talks about accepting the role of a lifetime and being born to run a starship.*

By Dale Kutzera

From the VOYAGER bible:

*A human, Janeway is by no means the only female Captain in Starfleet. But it is generally acknowledged that she is among the best—male or female. She embodies all that is exemplary about Starfleet officers: intelligent, thoughtful, perspicacious, sensitive to the feelings of others, tough when she has to be, and not afraid to take chances. She has a gift for doing the completely unexpected which has bailed her out of more than one scrape.*

*The daughter of a mathematician mother and an astrophysicist father, Janeway was on a track for a career in science. Her natural leadership abilities manifested themselves quickly, however, and she was rapidly promoted to ever-more-responsible positions. And because of her hands-on experience in various science posts, she brings to her captaincy a greater familiarity with technology and science than any captain we've yet experienced.*

STAR TREK'S executive producing brain trust—Rick Berman, Michael Piller, and Jeri Taylor—had always wanted a woman captain. The only problem was finding the right woman for the part. They had their wish list of major stars they knew were out of reach. Then there were the

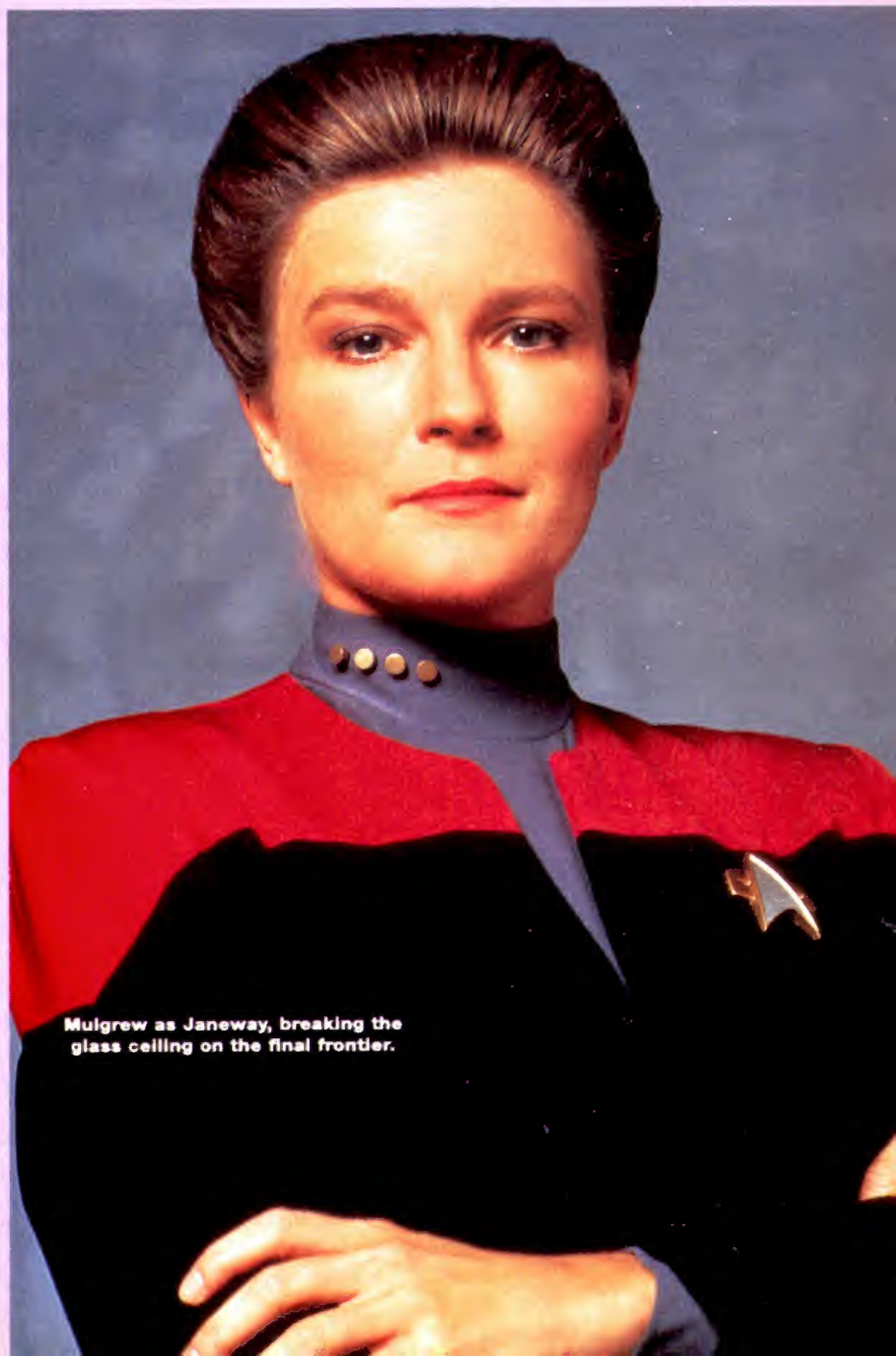
hundreds of auditions of actresses that were within reach, hearing the same scenes from "The Caretaker" read over and over. The correct actress was crucial to bringing off a new and different kind of captain.

"We wanted her to be a more accessible captain," said writer/producer Brannon Braga. "A captain who wasn't afraid to show emotions, a captain who wanted, and was actively trying to be warmer, more outwardly compassionate, more in tune with her crew."

Finally, the producers found their woman, not from the international talent search, but from a fateful call from Genevieve Bujold's agent Merritt Blake. Within a week, the producers were taken from the thrilling prospect of having a famous feature-film actress in the center chair, to the anguish of having no captain at all (for



Mulgrew had a short stint as Mrs. Columbo.



Mulgrew as Janeway, breaking the glass ceiling on the final frontier.

details on the Bujold Incident, see related story on page 39).

"You never know what fate is going to do," said Jeri Taylor. "[Kate Mulgrew] had read in New York and was put on tape, and, by her own admission, did not read particularly well that day. Just didn't click and I don't know that we ever even saw her tape or whether the casting director thought she just hadn't hit it. I don't remember. However, knowing she hadn't hit her stride, when she got back out to Los Angeles, she asked to read for us in person. She did that about the same time Genevieve was dancing in front of us. So we read Kate and she really was good, but our eyes were dazzled by star power."

When Bujold resigned, the trio of producers were left with an \$8 million film in production—without a star. Desperate, they brought back in the most recent semi-finalists for reconsideration, including Mulgrew. The producers ultimately took four women to the studio for final consideration. No men were considered as changing the captain's sex would have required changes to the supporting cast.

"By that time the die was cast," Taylor continued, "because if we were going to go with a male captain, we would have gone with a female first officer. It had to be a woman captain, at least in our minds, so we went in with these four women and Kate was simply wonderful. She just understood this character from the get go. Lines that had sort of sounded corny coming from other people, she had so much passion and integrity that they were just golden. We breathed a sigh of relief and said, 'You've got the job.' That same day she was in hair and makeup for a *TV Guide* spread and her world has not been the same since."

As Mulgrew told a capacity audience at her first Trek convention in Pasadena last March, "Going to network is quite a harrowing experience. It's down to the wire, between you and two or three other women. You go to the Cooper building at Paramount and 20 people are in a room, behind a table, staring at you. They are all there—the executive producers, the producers, the writers, directors—everybody who would cast a vote is sitting there. You have already signed a contract called a test deal which means if you are their choice that's your deal. If you're not their choice, it goes in the garbage can and you're a schmuck for another day of your life."

"That hour is horrendous, because you not only admire and respect the women you're competing against, but the stakes are so unbearably high. It must be what athletes feel before a race. But with Janeway something more happened. I thought, 'I just know who she is and I'm going to honor her in this audition.' And I just did it and when I came out and the other women were standing there, I felt even if I didn't get it, [the producers] would have made a terrible mistake, because I was born to play her."

Mulgrew, whose last featured role in a se-



Kate Mulgrew in her starring role in 1985's *REMO WILLIAMS: THE ADVENTURE BEGINS* as starved Army Major Fleming, a penchant for command.

**“The directors try to put me in a chair and I say, ‘No chair for me.’ Janeway never sits down. She’s a mover I was born to play.”**

**—Kate Mulgrew, Janeway—**

ries was as MRS. COLUMBO in 1979, had not been a Trek aficionado, despite her close friendship with John DeLancie. "John forced me on pain of death to watch his [TNG] episodes and I always remember the times I did watch thinking that the level of writing, the performances, the whole patina was excellent. It's a cut above. And now that I've worked on VOYAGER I can tell you it truly is. The standards are very high from every level. It's a great working atmosphere."

After months of grueling long days and extracurricular activity such as unveiling a VOYAGER mural on Hollywood Boulevard and attending a White House luncheon to honor women scientists, it's little wonder Mulgrew knows Janeway inside and out. "I am very vigilant about what Janeway means, especially to young women, and that responsibility is enormous and deeply gratifying. Hillary Clinton told me herself [the First Lady's] job is so profoundly important if she can do even one day of it well, she may have altered the history of our tenure here. That's probably true of Janeway. We were honoring eminent female scientists from throughout the world and I had a young girl, 17, come up to me and say, 'I'm going to M.I.T. because of you

Mrs. Mulgrew and one day I will be a chief engineer at NASA.' And I thought, 'Katy, you've got a lot of work to do.'"

Mulgrew plays Janeway with a kind of marching, hands on hips directness, never one to beat around the bush, but always willing to let you know where she stands. "She's very strong," said Mulgrew. "She never sits down. She's a mover. I'm not going to sit in a chair as an actress and Janeway doesn't sit in her chair as a commander or a scientist. She wants to go with the away teams. She is always [standing] in front of the view screen and I'm the one who does that. The directors try to put me in the chair and I say no chair for me. It's a marriage between writing staff and actress and this has so far been a real bliss because we are evolving. They know more about STAR TREK than I do, but I know more about Janeway. If we forge the kind of allegiance I'm hoping to forge, I think the possibilities and opportunities should be endless."

One possibility Mulgrew doesn't see is the kind of galactic affairs enjoyed by Kirk on the original series or Riker on TNG. "I've talked to the executive producers at length about this and it is a delicate issue. The men—and this smacks a bit of a double standard—could get away with a little more of that. Kathryn Janeway may be a commander, but she is a lady nonetheless, and my understanding is that it won't happen until she has very carefully resolved her connections on Earth—until I have let him go and enough time has transpired so a relationship could evolve, one of integrity and depth. It will be true love and therefore my suspicion is that it will be tragic love, because as we all know true love is tragic. (If Janeway) falls in love it will have to be done so beautifully, and I will love him so completely that he will have to die. I'd like to see an episode or two where we see that her heart has been broken. That in fact the price has been extraordinarily high for what she is going to do that if she is going to forsake love it will be at great risk to her sense of well-being. I would like to see them explore my sadness in that regard which is a better way to show a woman, I think, than someone who is constantly mothering."

Judging from Mulgrew's performance before the partisan crowd of STAR TREK fans, it's clear the producers have not only found a captain, but an eloquent ambassador as well. "I've never been so completely and utterly happy in a role," she said. "We work very long hours, but it's so continually challenging, it's like love—it's a love affair. The rapport among the cast was instant. I love this group of people and I think if nothing else that's what radiates. I want people to see how happy we truly are right now. If we were to lose any one person I think it would be devastating to the future of the show. Everybody has become so completely who they are. I have been very blessed to play this role, to find her at this time in my life. I love her." □

they demanded a new ship-show from co-executive producers Rick Berman and Michael Piller. "We had very mixed feelings about it," Piller said in August of 1994. "We were worried about the over-saturation. We don't know how much STAR TREK is too much STAR TREK and we had just climbed the mountain and are very proud of what we accomplished on DS9. We looked at each other—do we want to do it again? The studio said, 'Look guys, we'd like you to do it again, but if you don't, we'll get somebody else to do it.' We had carried on the franchise, and it seemed to be the right thing to do, not to let it be put in someone's hands who didn't know what they were doing."

Piller and Berman's first order of business was enlisting the help of Jeri Taylor, who became executive producer of TNG in its fourth season, and had brought to the show a strong emphasis on character. Taylor's presence would also allow Piller to gradually extract himself from day-to-day TREK activity. "I strongly recommended that we include Jeri into the mix, because I felt that I needed

to look past STAR TREK and move on to other pursuits," said Piller. "And I wanted to protect the franchise and protect VOYAGER by having a third strong writer. Jeri has earned the right to be part of this so we brought her in."

VOYAGER began in a series of lunch meetings between Piller, Taylor, and Rick Berman.

"Rick, Michael and

I started having thrice-weekly luncheons in Rick's office and started talking, trying to hammer out characters and concepts," said Taylor. "We absolutely knew we wanted a ship-show to replace THE NEXT GENERATION. We knew it would be contemporary with NEXT GEN and DS9 and, in our mind, we knew we wanted a woman captain. Those were the certain givens going in. Everything else was up for grabs."

#### A WOMAN CAPTAIN

The decision to create a female captain dealt more with story content than political correctness. With 30 years of male STAR TREK heroes, the producers were stumped on how to devise a new spin on the lead protagonist. "What could we do with a man that hadn't been done?" said Taylor. "We had one kind of captain in Kirk and another kind of captain in Picard, and yet another in Sisko. We were jumping through hoops trying to say what kind of man is not like any of those others, but is still a man. That just

continued on page 51

# STAR TREK VOYAGER

## DESIGNING THE STARSHIP

*Richard James and Rick Sternbach made the ship leaner and meaner.*

By Dale Kutzera

"We are in completely unknown space," said Jeri Taylor. "This meant we needed a leaner machine. The *Voyager* is not the floating hotel that the *Enterprise* was. It is a ship that was specifically designed for action. It's smaller, it is more maneuverable, it can land on a planet's surface, it can be sent into situations where a Galaxy class starship simply shouldn't function. We knew that this was going to be an action-adventure oriented series and the *Voyager* was bred for action. Again a throw-back to the original series."

If the original *Enterprise* symbolized the kitschy psychedelic artifice of the 1960s, and the *Enterprise-D*, the portly, middle-aged self-satisfaction of the 1980s, then *Voyager* seems to indicate that the 1990s are a leaner, meaner era, where the ability to run

away from danger equals the ability to fight. The *Voyager* is a sleek departure from the multitude of saucer/nacelles configurations we have seen on TNG and in the STAR TREK feature films. It, along with DEEP SPACE NINE's *Defiant*, stakes a new design direction for the TREK universe.

The plumb assignment of creating the latest TREK flagship fell to two NEXT GENERATION veterans. Through the spring and summer of 1994 production designer Richard James and senior illustrator and technical consultant Rick Sternbach worked in tandem, the former on sets and the latter on the exterior. Sternbach was the second artist hired on TNG, just four months after Andy Probert, who designed most of the *Enterprise-D*. In years since, both men have created a number of new sets, spaces, and props for the *Enterprise*, further defining the STAR TREK look. For

Production designer Richard James on the bridge under construction. James worked with senior illustrator and technical consultant Rick Sternbach to create a throwback to the original *Enterprise*.

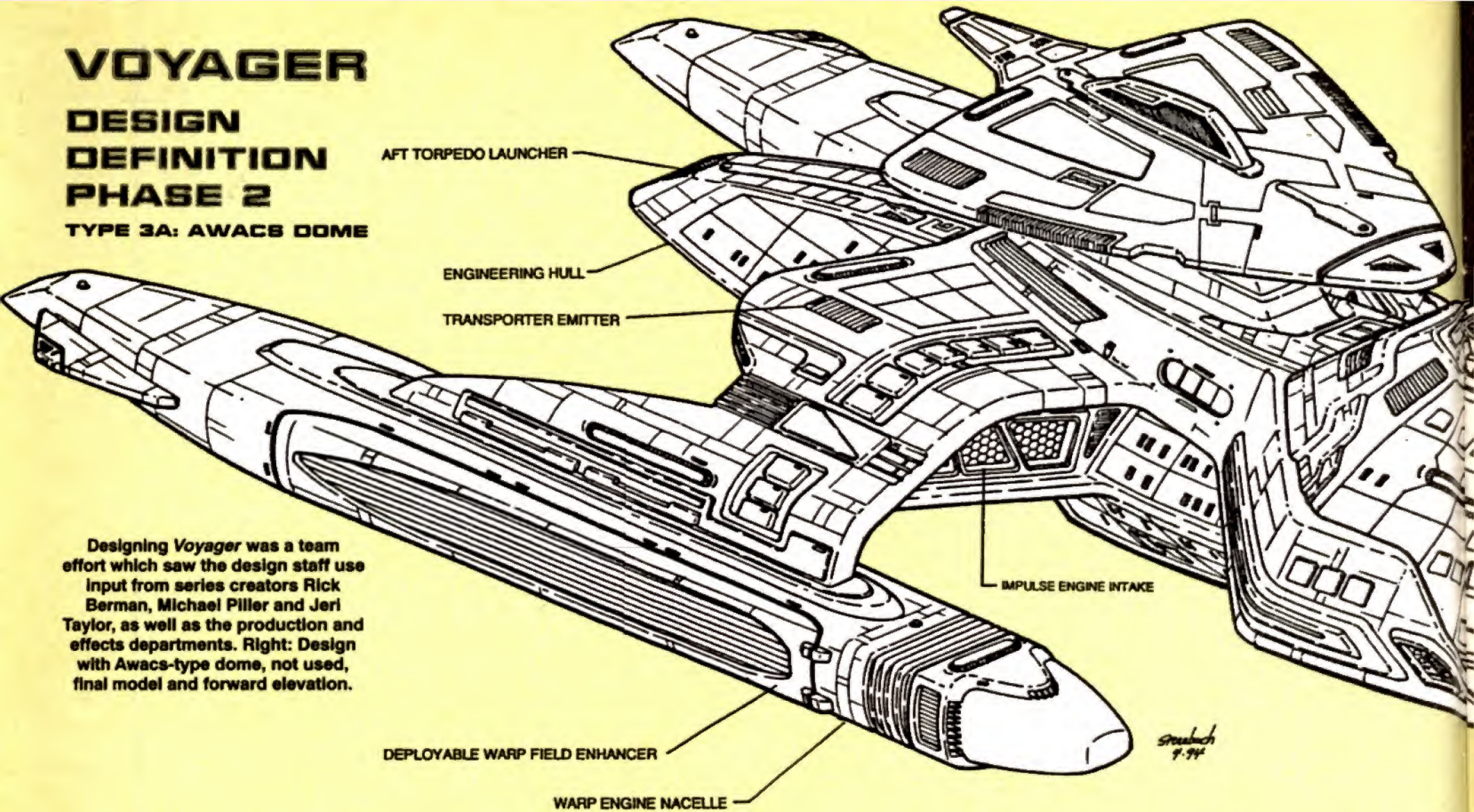


Roddenberry's heir, executive producer Rick Berman.

# VOYAGER

## DESIGN DEFINITION PHASE 2

### TYPE 3A: AWACS DOME



Designing *Voyager* was a team effort which saw the design staff use input from series creators Rick Berman, Michael Piller and Jeri Taylor, as well as the production and effects departments. Right: Design with Awacs-type dome, not used, final model and forward elevation.

both, however, *Voyager* presented their first chance to design a flagship vessel from the ground up.

"When Rick Berman, Michael Piller and Jeri Taylor set us off on this mission we were still in the midst of NEXT GENERATION," said Sternbach. "The writer's bible described the ship as a streamlined bullet sort of shape. Of course, they had no actual picture in their minds of what this would be, but they gave us some general parameters; we would have a much smaller crew, the ship would be much smaller than the *Enterprise*, and it would incorporate technology that was slightly more advanced. Then they said go design a ship."

James and Sternbach would roughly sketch out various ideas for *Voyager* that were reviewed by the executive producers. "We reviewed everything," said Taylor. "It was an ongoing process and it underwent many, many changes. There was even a mock-up model built which didn't look quite like it did when it was on flat paper and so we canned that and went back to the drawing board. It was an exhausting, lengthy process, but we knew that it was a crucial element. STAR TREK is wonderful stories and all of

**“We are in unknown space. We needed a leaner ship. *Voyager* is no floating hotel like the *Enterprise*. It's designed for action.”**

—Producer Jeri Taylor—

that, but for a lot of people it's the groovy hardware that they like, so it was very important that the ship be appealing to people.”

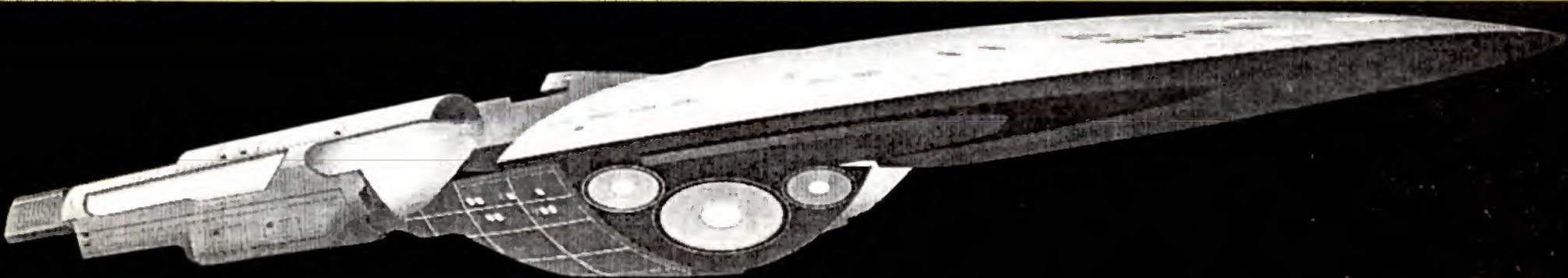
The most striking “wild idea” to survive to the final five-foot *Voyager* model was the absence of the traditional saucer and neck. With *Voyager*, the two would be melded into one streamlined, organic shape. Said Sternbach, “One of the early blue-pencil sketches that I did depicted the ship from a 3/4 rear angle and I said, ‘My God, this looks like the back of a cobra.’ We’ve sort of prided ourselves on being able to evoke some animal imagery. The *Enterprise* cer-

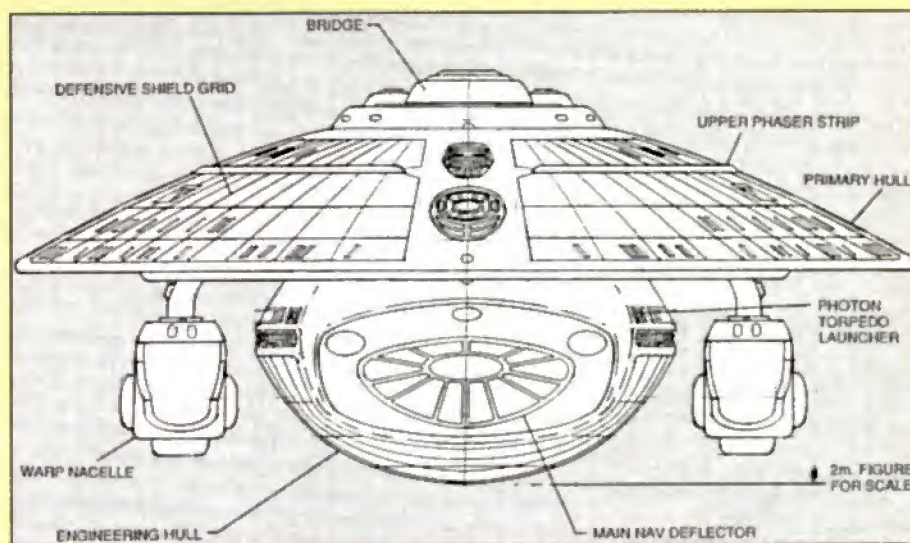
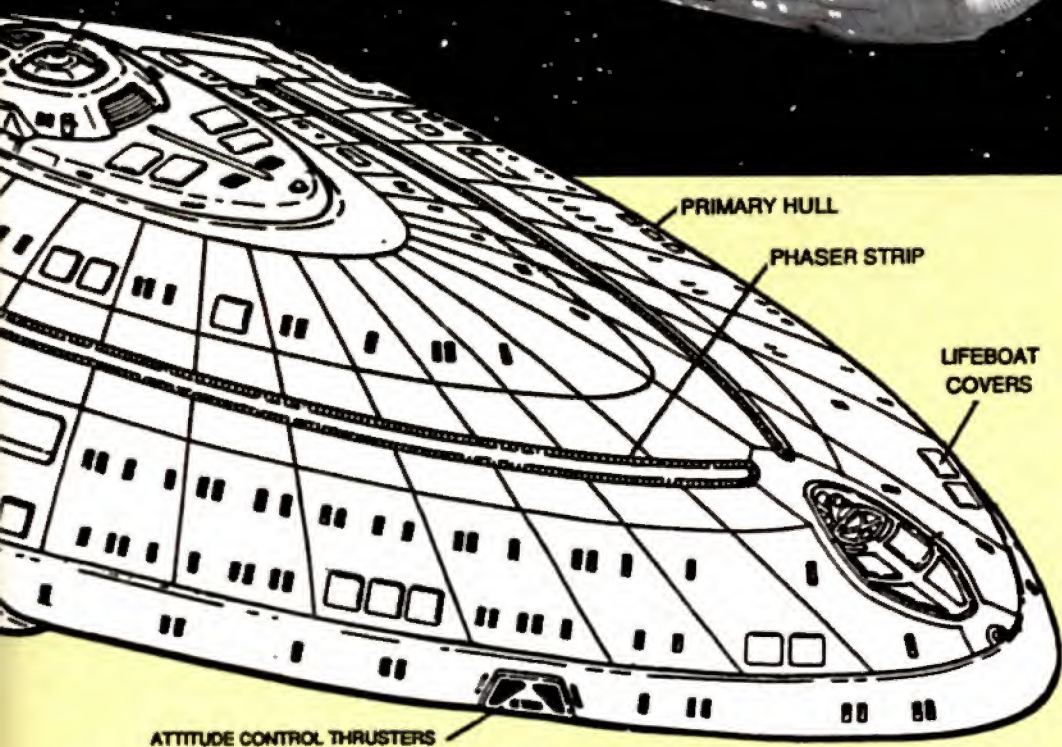
tainly has a number of interesting shapes evocative of marine animals. And we’ve put that sort of design sense into some of the other alien craft as well. The Romulan war bird certainly has some animal feel to it. The future Klingon attack cruiser that was seen in ‘All Good Things’ has a reptilian feel, even to the point where there was a rattlesnake head designed into the front of it (two communications antennas became the fangs). We’re certainly not going to beat people over the head with that kind of design, but if you can trigger a little something in the subconscious I think it works to our advantage.

“The actual design process was not much different than what we went through seven years ago. I certainly built upon what Probert had developed for the *Enterprise* in terms of the exterior look. The major design change is that we are losing the dorsal neck. In making the ship a little more sleek, we’ve gone to a blended hull, very much like the *Enterprise*, but more compact.”

The *Voyager* would also sport moving nacelles, indicative of the new-generation technology the ship was equipped with and drawing upon the environmental impact

Various *Voyager* design configurations and parameters were modeled on the computer during the early design phase to fine-tune the shape and size.





concerns established in TNG episode "Force of Nature." "The nacelles will now operate on a variable geometry system," said Sternbach. "In much the same way you have an F-14 Tomcat with its swing wings, the *Voyager's* nacelles will be able to pivot up and down to perform some type of acceleration. We will see the wings pivot as it goes into warp or as it comes out of warp. We haven't worked out all the 24th-century mechanics of it, but the general wisdom is the pivoting of the nacelles has something to do with the efficiency of the warp field. It gets into a lot of this bogus warp science, but it's also something we can hang on to for consistency."

Considering the importance of verisimilitude in any STAR TREK ship, the designers were careful to map out the correlation between interior sets and the scale model. The bridge set in particular, along with the Captain's ready room to the starboard and conference room to the port, can be specifically located on the five-foot *Voyager* model. "Richard's concerns were how the interior sets would be integrated within the miniature," said Sternbach. "It was a big concern of mine as well. Realize that this is a much

smaller ship than the *Enterprise-D*, just a touch longer than the original series *Enterprise* at 1130 feet in length. At that scale windows become much larger than they did on the *Enterprise* and we have a chance to show you windows from the outside, then when we cut to the inside you will see the same basic proportions in the architecture.

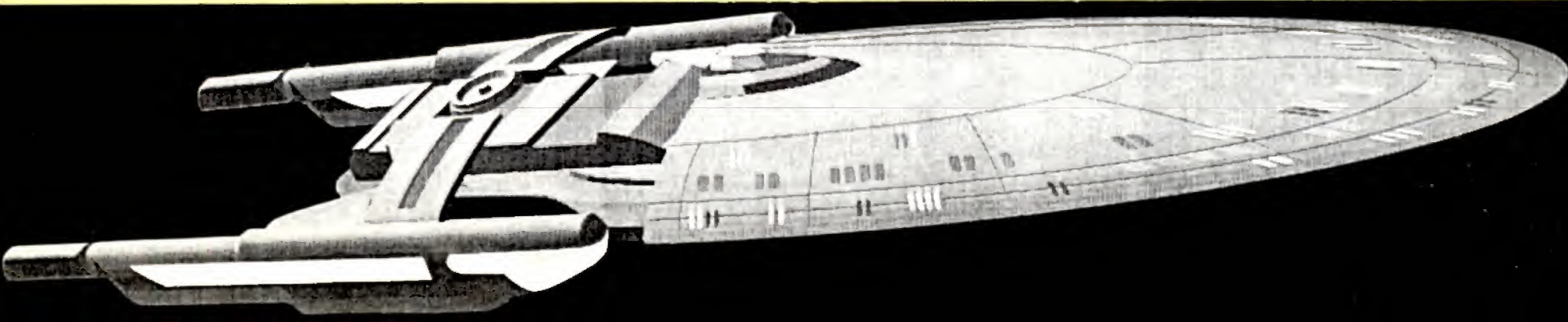
"This was something that was worked out on TNG as well. We knew that all the energy from the engine core has to go out to the nacelles and we logically planted main engineering on deck 36 which was level with the *Enterprise's* wings. The sets for the *Enterprise* fit well because that ship was enormous and you could plant these sets anywhere. If we told the writers where Captain Picard's quarters were, for example, on deck 8 near the bow of the ship they had no problem with that. A lot of their concerns are more in the look and the writing. The technical specifics are not going to affect the story that much. With *Voyager* there are certain things that have to be in certain places because of the shape of the primary hull and secondary hull. For example, the only place Captain Janeway's quarters logically fit was on deck three. It was the only

place we could plant a bay consisting of five big windows. And the only place we could logically place the officers mess was one deck above her. And you'll see where these things are on the miniature. The ship shows off human scale in a much clearer way than the *Enterprise* did. It's a big juggling act but fortunately most of us have been in place since 1987 and we understand the design of STAR TREK to the point where we can fit a set within a miniature and make it all work."

As carpenters and craftsmen created the VOYAGER sets on the Paramount lot, model maker Tony Meininger was handed plan and elevation views from which he and his team would create a state-of-the-art model, complete with computer controlled lights and moving nacelles. The size of the model was based in part on the size of the Image G studio in which it was to be filmed. The motion-control rig would have to be able to shoot both wide shots of the entire ship, as well as close shots of surface detail.

"We had a very short time to produce the model—a little over eight weeks—so there wasn't a lot of revisions" said Meininger. "They had gone through a pretty complete

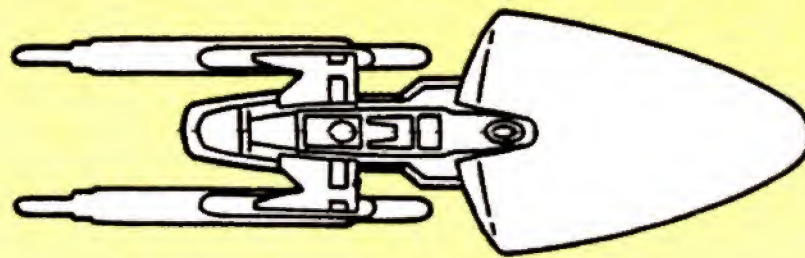
Computer modelling allowed the designers to view the design in progress from any angle desired in order to give the ship a compelling profile in space.



# Size Comparison USS Voyager and Other Starfleet Vessels

## USS Voyager.

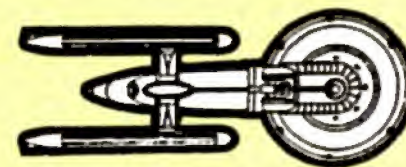
Length:  
Mass:  
Crew:



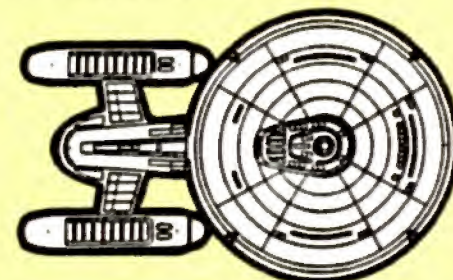
0.0.0 USS Voyager, NCC-73264



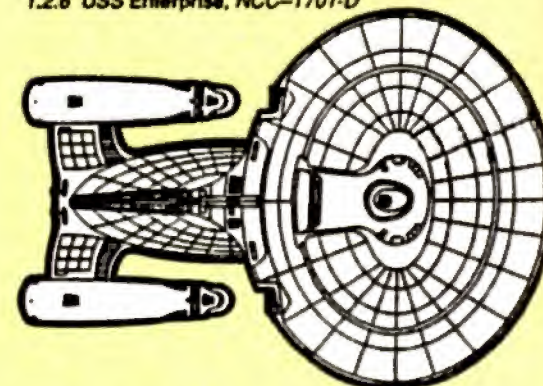
1.2.4 USS Enterprise, NCC-1701-B



1.2.5 USS Enterprise, NCC-1701-C

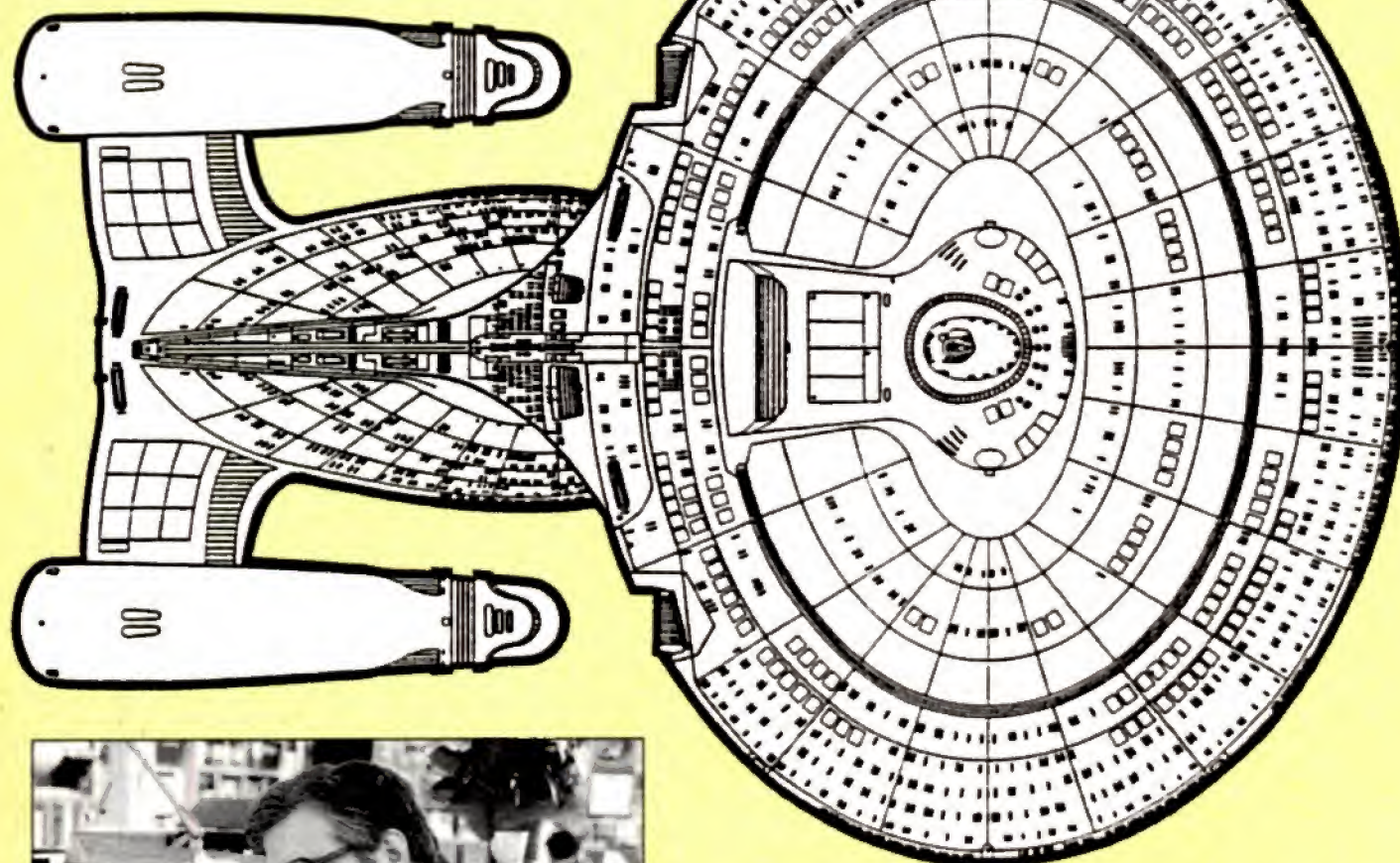


1.2.6 USS Enterprise, NCC-1701-D



## USS Enterprise:

Length: 642 m. (2108 ft.)  
Mass: 4,930,000 metric tons  
Crew: 1012



Designer and senior illustrator Rick Sternbach.

Rick Sternbach's schematic showing the size of the Voyager at 1,250 feet with a crew of 200, compared to various incarnations of the Enterprise. The new ship is between the original U.S.S. Enterprise 1701A at 1,022 feet and a crew of 400 and the Excelsior class ship of the movies at 1,596 feet with a crew of 600.

planning cycle and we ended up with basically four views top and side, and front and rear. Basically we get the drawings and make up some sections from the drawings to get a sense of the form of the thing and then start constructing them. By interpolating between the different views we built a hard form of the ship out of wood and a lot of other composite materials. It's quite by the numbers and very accurate to the drawings. There were a bunch of discussions from the production end about shooting. It has to be big enough for a camera to get fairly close to it, yet not too big to be cumbersome in handling. A lot of people discussed what the optimum size for their needs would be. You look at what the end product wants to be and try to find space inside. The hardest constraint was definitely the wing articulators, especially the cross section of wings when they come out, that whole sec-

tion is pretty flat."

At this stage of creation, each department head provided input. "Everybody would go out and monitor the progress for different reasons," said special visual effects producer Dan Curry. "Rick [Sternbach] would make sure it conformed to his design, and we would monitor it for how the models were going to work. Would the lights fit in? What were the practicalities of shooting? Everybody's work influences everybody else's. No department functions as an island and we kibitz in areas where our involvement is important. In particular with models is the surface detail. It's one thing to design it and another to photograph it. One of the problems on TNG was that the Enterprise was conceived as this huge ship with a perfectly smooth skin. It's a wonderful concept, but when you photograph it, it looks like an 18-inch toy. There is no detail to give it scale. That's why people responsible for photographing an object have to be involved in the design process."

As a smaller ship, the surface detail of the Voyager was rougher than that of the Enterprise. Where opaque window panels sufficed for the enormous Galaxy class ship, the Voyager model would sport clear

panes with tiny photos of the actual sets installed behind.

"Because the Voyager is a smaller ship, yet we are making a fairly large-scale model, you can get a look through some of the windows," said James. "I didn't want to see white rectangles moving by, so we went around and photographed the actual sets at very wide angles. So in the windows on Voyager are transparencies of actual sets. When the ship goes by you don't necessarily see specific details in the windows, but you get the feeling there is something in there. They are the actual colors of the sets and there is a bit of a parallax. The transparencies inside the windows of the Captain's ready room and conference room are of those sets."

On screen, the Voyager appears graceful and sleek, but the effects supervisors are careful to shoot it only from its best angles. "There are certain angles it looks great at and certain angles it looks terrible," said effects supervisor Joe Bauer. "By design it's not as graceful as the Enterprise. If you look at it directly from the front it looks like a lamp or if you look at it from behind it looks like an umbrella or Chinese hat or bar

continued on page 125

that episode."

Taylor was also worried about the effect the story would have on the character of Paris. "I was concerned that our Tom Paris was not well served. His behavior was somewhat questionable and we are going to have to do some stories that redeem him. I don't want him to become the randy guy whose only character note is that he's trying to get laid."

Piller, however, stands by the show. "I was just very pleased with the way it turned out," he said. "There is some difference of opinion around here about it, but it was one of my prouder moments of sitting home watching television. I just thought it worked on every level. I thought it was sexy, I thought the science fiction was terrific, it had a space battle, it had the concept of being punished by reliving your victim's memories—I thought that was neat. It kept you guessing until the very end of the show. I thought it was a wonderful show for Paris, a wonderful show for Tuvok; I felt the direction was great, and it had a wonderful score. I was just really happy sitting down and watching that."



Paris gets involved in a film noir murder mystery à la Raymond Chandler in "Ex Post Facto," a pet project for Michael Piller.

"This is the next emanation? This is the afterlife?"

—alien

#### EMANATIONS

★★★★1/2

3/13/95. Production number: 109. Stardate: 48623.5. Written by Brannon Braga. Directed by David Livingston.

When the *Voyager* away team explores an alien burial site, Ensign Harry Kim is caught up in a sub-space vacuole and transported to the alien culture's homeworld. His presence there causes many to doubt their traditional belief in the afterlife and Kim soon realizes the only way he can return to the *Voyager* is to die and be transported back to the burial site.

"Emanations" maintains the careful balance between adventure and character insight established by the first half dozen episodes. For instance, time is taken in the first scene to reveal something of Chakotay's sensitivity to the rituals of other cultures. "I'm glad you noticed that," said Brannon Braga. "I thought it would be nice to show that this is a crew that has a lot of respect for alien cultures. To the point where they are not going to mess with anything. Certainly, that whole scene on the asteroid where they are discovering the bodies was an attempt to give Chakotay some character, to show that he's an expert in paleontological events...and that he's really smart."

There is even a touching "Janeway moment" at the end, where the Captain counsels the young Ensign Kim to stop and smell the roses. "The moment at the end was a definite attempt to show a Captain who takes the time to appeal to the human equation in all of this," continued Braga. "She tells Kim to take some time off to think about—and in fact, encourages him to seek a creative outlet. It would be nice to see some of our crew members actually engage in some sort of artistic endeavors. THE NEXT GENERATION tended to relegate art to the realm

# STAR TREK VOYAGER

## CHAKOTAY

*Casting Robert Beltran as the Native American Maquis captain.*

By Dale Kutzera

From the VOYAGER bible:

*The First Officer is a complex—some would say difficult—man. His background is unique: he spans two cultures, one foot in each, belonging to both and yet to neither. In the 22nd century, a group of Indian traditionalists became dissatisfied with the "homogenization" of humans that was occurring on Earth. Strongly motivated to preserve their cultural identity, they relocated to a remote planet near what has now become known as the Demilitarized Zone.*

*Chakotay is a member of that Indian nation. Always individualistic, what his people called a "contrary," he broke from his people, educated himself in the ways of the 24th century, and attended Starfleet Academy. When he learned the Cardassians were attacking the Indians, he left Starfleet to defend them, joining the then-infant Maquis.*

*Chakotay practices the traditional rituals aboard Voyager. By the 24th century Indians have developed a technology which allows them to experience vision quests in a completely safe way; they have "mapped" the unconscious and are comfortable roaming there. Chakotay has a "spirit guide"—a timber wolf—which appears to him now in dreams and visions, and often guides him in his decision-making process. He strikes an immediate and powerful bond with Janeway, and an unusual one with Kim, who through Chakotay's example begins to question his own homogenization and the loss of his traditional values.*

The back story for the character of Chakotay, established in the TNG episode "Journey's End," was a favorite of the producers. It provided an opportunity to represent an Earth culture rarely seen in STAR



Robert Beltran as First Officer Chakotay, Janeway's senior officer among the Maquis rebels on her ship.

TREK, that of the native Indians. Casting proved to be a greater challenge, as their first pick, Robert Beltran, was left hanging by a thread during the months-long process. The gender of Chakotay depended in part on that of the *Voyager*'s captain. If a female actress could not be found for the center chair and a male was cast, then the Native American first officer would have been female.

"Robert was standing outside the plate glass window on one foot and then the other," said executive producer Jeri Taylor, "because we didn't want to cast Chakotay until we knew [who would play Janeway]."



Robert Beltran as Chakotay on the bridge with Janeway in "Eye of the Needle," sending a message home. Beltran is of Mexican Indian ancestry, suggesting a Mayan heritage for the role's backstory.

We must have read him five times. We were reading other Native Americans at the same time and we felt he was far and away the best for the part. Then we began to read female Native Americans, so he was on hold for a very long time. It's torture for an actor to be held out that long. Finally we hired him and are delighted with him."

An equally lengthy discussion about Chakotay's character followed. Sensitive to Native American groups, the producers were careful to handle the character's spirituality in a respectful and intelligent manner. No particular tribe has been specified and the outward signs of his ancestry were intentionally kept to a minimum. "Because Robert is in fact Mexican Indian, we are building up that aspect and will be suggesting Mayan ancestry for him as opposed to the Indian nations north of the Mexican border we are more familiar with," said Taylor. "Indigenous people are indigenous people and I think it makes a nice statement that they don't have to be our Sioux or our Apaches or our anything. [Mexican Indians] were pillaged by Europe and the white man just as much as [North American Indians] were."

The producers are equally careful about the accouterments in his quarters, his civilian clothes, and possessions. Rather than the clichéd long hair of the Native Americans seen in "Journey's End," they decided to go to the other extreme. "In terms of hair we figured there were two ways to go: one was long and one was very short," said Taylor. "We do not want to run the risk of creating a cliché, of falling into stereotype and almost anything we do that is traditional will create that impression, so we went the other way and cut all his hair off. In fact, the first time it was cut it was like an eight of an inch. We said 'Short not scalped!' No pun intended."

Noted series co-creator Michael Piller,

"Chakotay was a very difficult proposition. We were desperately seeking an actor who had an authentic Indian heritage; and that limited the talent considerably. There were two actors that we liked a lot. Robert Beltran was much more of a leading man type, and the other was more of a character actor type. The studio was very impressed with Robert Beltran, and so we joined that consensus and could not be more delighted with how the chemistry is working with him as First Officer."

For writer/producer Brannon Braga, the concern is to keep Chakotay from fading into the woodwork. Where Tuvok's intellect and Paris' angst were easy to grasp and dramatize, Chakotay's "handle" was harder to grasp. "He's the one character we have been struggling with most," said Braga. "There is a danger because we have, in essence, two Captains on the bridge; the senior Captain who gives all the orders, and Chakotay. What does he do? So it is the Riker syndrome, somewhat, but he has a whole dimension that Riker didn't have when TNG began, which is his spartan, spiritual/technological endeavors. You are not sure what Chakotay is about. He is very internal, reserved; you know he's got a lot going on inside, but we don't know exactly what. It's good to have an enigmatic character. Maybe he will become our Guinan. What we do know about him is: he's incredibly loyal and incredibly hard-working; he stands behind Janeway 100%; and he's determined to make this situation work. That's what makes him a good commander."

Beltran's feature film credits include SHADOW HUNTER, BUGSY, and KISS ME A KILLER. His television credits include the regular series role of Lt. Soto on Fox's MODELS INC., as well as guest starring roles in ABC's LOIS & CLARK: THE NEW ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN, CBS's MURDER, SHE WROTE and HBO's SLOWBLEED. □

of continuing adult education. As though art was kind of like night school. Data has a funny little 'hobby,' or someone has a holodeck 'hobby.' No one really seemed to have much of a passion for art in the twenty-third century. You would think maybe on a voyage designed to seek out new worlds—we are speaking about the *Enterprise* now—there would be a writer on board. A 23rd-century Dominick Dunne to catalog experiences and give his perspective; and to come back after the seven-year voyage and write a book. Maybe I'm overreacting. Maybe a part of Starfleet training involves an incredible amount of art and culture. I just don't know."

While the scenes between Kim and an alien about to sacrifice himself are a bit labored and convenient, this episode boasts strong, confident performances by the entire cast, and some eye-popping effects sequences of the *Voyager* amidst an asteroid belt, designed by visual effects supervisor David Stipes, and executed by Amblin Imaging (see story of page 84).



Kim talks an alien preparing for burial out of sacrificing himself in "Emanations," so Kim can take his place and return to the ship.

"You never had any intention to help, did you?"  
—Janeway

## PRIME FACTORS

★★★

3/20/95. Production Number: 110. Teleplay by Michael Perricone & Greg Elliott. Story by David R. George III and Eric A. Stillwell. Directed by Les Landau.

The crew of *Voyager* encounters alien beings known as the Sikarians—a race renowned for their incredible hospitality. When Ensign Kim discovers that the Sikarians have the technology to "fold" space and travel more than 40,000 lights years in an instant, the *Voyager* crew thinks they've found their way home. The Sikarians' customs, however, do not permit the exchange of technology with alien races. As Janeway refuses to break the prime directive and forcibly take the technology, several among the Maquis crew plot a mutiny.

Much of "Prime Factors" is rather commonplace—a lot of conventional exposition leading up to the central premise of the mutiny. In fact, the entire story can be seen as a means to justify this clandestine conspiracy, and the wonderful twist of having Tuvok join the mutineers. As dramatic as this pregnant moment is, even Tim Russ wondered if the writers weren't taking an easy shortcut. "There were some points missing that we should have clarified in that story," said Russ. "The problem is that you're trying to clarify them two days before you shoot them. I did get a lot of things changed in that script. Janeway's whole speech at the end was much different. It was much more reprimanding and much harsher, and, based on their relationship, that would have not been appropriate.

"The producers reasoning was that [Tuvok] acted because it was the only logical thing to do, which is not accurate. The logic is only a method in which you do things, not a reason why you do things. You don't act on it. You just take whatever action you do take in a logical fashion. I was trying to get the point across to them that we needed to make it more clear

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# STAR TREK VOYAGER

## HOLOGRAPHIC DOCTOR

*Robert Picardo on his role as the humorless holographic projection who cures the ship's ills.*

By Dale Kutzera

From the VOYAGER bible:

*Doc is not really a person, but a holographic figure—an emergency medical program devised by Starfleet. When the ship's doctor is unavailable, or needs added assistance, he can call on the holographic physician. The holo-doctor appears as a human male and has been programmed with the most up-to-date medical knowledge; he is capable of treating any disease or injury. He has little personality when we first meet him, except for some testiness and arrogance. Subsequently, he will undergo some "tinkering" with his program in order to warm him up a bit—although not always with the desired results.*

Perhaps more than any other character, the holographic doctor, known in the pilot and bible as Doc Zimmerman, remained a mystery to the producers. The idea for a sentient, holographic character stemmed from the TNG episodes "Elementary, Dear Data" and "Ship in a Bottle," in which the villainous Moriarity is created on the holodeck. In fact, according to Jeri Taylor, Moriarity himself was considered "for about 45 seconds" largely because the producers had such respect for actor Daniel Davis.

Another idea, one that lasted much longer, was to involve Dwight Schultz's Lt. Barclay. "Dwight Schultz was read for the part and we liked him very much," said Taylor, "but we were just too far apart in money, much too far apart, for it ever to come to fruition. Dwight has a very solid career and I think he realized he would forever be locking himself into a character. Once you do this and if you're here for five to seven years what happens afterward may be a little in question, and he wanted to be compensated for that to an extent that we



Picardo as Doc Zimmerman, named for his programmer, a hologram with attitude and a severe lack of bedside manner.

simply couldn't afford."

And so the producers auditioned countless actors for the part, both comedic and serious, trying to find a character they themselves didn't know very well. "We approached it from character," said Taylor. "Here is someone who is created as an emergency room doctor. They have a job to do and they do it. They are not trained in patient care. They have to work quickly and efficiently. We had this idea of an irascible doctor who was lord of his own domain. All he ever thought he would have to do was come

and stitch people up and then go away."

There was little for the Doctor to do in the pilot, and many actors, sensing the similarities to the other STAR TREK human foils, Spock and Data, played it with a heavy dose of Brent Spiner. In response, the producers would advise the actors in one direction or the other, in some instances in different directions at the same time. If anyone could put this enigma into shape, it was executive producer Michael Piller. "We were concerned about what to do with this character when we started the series," said Piller. "He seemed fairly restricted, how were we going to write stories about him? And as so frequently happens, the fact that he is a character in conflict, a character who doesn't know where his place is in life or on the ship, and is trying to find his way; what you have there is conflict, and conflict by its very nature creates humor and it creates story possibilities. It allows you to do stories that come from within your cast of characters rather than bringing somebody else in from the outside to create it. Here's a character just like Data, just like Spock, who is trying to resolve-reconcile what he is doing, who he is and where he fits in to all of this. And that's just the best kind of character you can find.

"There is the idea that people treat him like he's not there. You're dealing with a character who is not a life form; and we have become very comfortable with holodecks and holosuites over the last seven years. We turn them on and we turn them off, and we don't think about their feelings, or anything else. So essentially, you give the character self-awareness, but you continue to treat him like a hologram. What's the effect of that going to be on somebody's personality? It's being treated without any respect or any consideration; so I have to

build these defense mechanisms up. And what these defense mechanisms are is a quick, sharp mouth and self-deprecating humor. Much of the humor that the doctor has is at his own expense, and it isn't until someone like Kes comes along and says, 'I'm not going to let you do that to yourself anymore,' that he suddenly sits up and says, 'Somebody is treating me like a human being again,' and the warmth and the possibilities that come through that, and the relationship with Kes that has come through that, I think has made him a truly stand-out character."

None of that, however, was in the pilot script given to Robert Picardo, certainly not in the audition scenes involving Doc clipped to its cover. Picardo, busy with a play at the Taper Forum in L.A., almost passed on the chance to audition. "We had just started doing run-throughs which is when you have to nail down and learn your lines and tie together all the different scenes you've been working on individually and I was extremely busy," he said. "That night I was learning my lines and the audition was the next day when I was rehearsing. So there was no guarantee I could even spring out of rehearsal for an hour and a half, rush over to Paramount and do the audition, much less read the material that night. So I kind of dropped the script by the bed thinking I'd have to pass. Then I had a fortuitous phone call from an actress friend of mine who had been on DS9 as a guest star. She said I had to read the script, it was terrific. So I looked at the Doc Zimmerman lines, but it didn't seem that funny to me. It's a one-joke part, colorless, and kind of robotic, but Neelix was really funny. So I called my agent and said I wouldn't read for the robot doctor, but I'd read for Neelix."

Recalled Taylor, "Robert Picardo had not wanted to read for the Doctor, I think because he just played one on CHINA BEACH. He read brilliantly for Neelix, and ultimately we took both him and Ethan Phillips, who we found in New York, to the studio and they liked both and gave us our choice. That was tough. Ultimately we went with Ethan because he has this cherubic face, and we went to Picardo and said 'Please, won't you consider reading for the Doctor?' At that point he said yes. The first time we heard the words come out of his mouth was when he read in front of the studio, and it was like he'd been waiting for us all this time. That's our Zimmerman."

"We could never find anybody who could pull the Doctor off, never," said Michael Piller. "We could not find anybody who got it; that sort of hologram with a complex, the idea of inferiority which goes



Picardo as Meg Mucklebones in Ridley Scott's LEGEND. The actor's thin stature lends itself to makeup work and Picardo was often called upon to bring Rob Bottin's prosthetics to life.

**“In the pilot it was a colorless one-joke part and kind of robotic. I told my agent I wouldn't read for the robot doc, but would for Neelix.”**

*—Robert Picardo, Doc—*

into that character. So, we ultimately got to a place where we were going to go with Ethan for Neelix, but we really wanted Picardo doing the doctor, and he came back in and just nailed it. That was like the last moment of the casting process.”

Picardo drew from both of his recent television series characters, Dr. Richard from CHINA BEACH, and Coach Cutlip on the WONDER YEARS, to create the Doctor. "I had an advantage in that there was an essential streak in the two characters that I had played most recently on TV that had a commonality with the Doctor. That gave me a head start as far as building the guy from scratch. I have a skill that I got to use in THE WONDER YEARS for playing characters that have a strong paranoid streak, characters who feel they are not being given the respect they feel they should be accorded and they respond with this mixture of arrogance and paranoia. That flipping between being superior on the one hand and barely able to keep together your inferiority. That was what characterized Coach Cutlip—a classic paranoid schizophrenic described by the writers in the pilot as having the greatest inferiority complex since Napoleon.”

Although “completely at sea” during the pilot, Picardo has latched on to every scrap of information about the Doctor in subsequent episodes, gradually building the boundaries of what the character is capable of. In particular, “Parallax” established that the Doctor was programmed with enough emotional acuity to properly deal with a patient's feelings. “My take on the whole thing is I've been given emotions that don't work correctly,” said Picardo. “In fact, my

primary emotion is paranoia. That comes from the fact that my situation is almost a parody of the human condition. We are all worried about mortality and how we might be snuffed out at any instant. Well, I have been snuffed out several instances a day and then called back into existence. I am almost a joke on our having no control over our destiny. Anyone can turn me on or off. So this character

has on the one hand the almost infinite power of knowledge and then he's utterly powerless in his existence. That dichotomy is enough to make anyone paranoid. Then there is the arrogance of the surgeon—the hands of God thing—which was very much a part of my CHINA BEACH character.”

Through the early episodes, Michael Piller paid close attention to the Doctor, building on the self-conscious humor Picardo brought to the role. “I think the other writers would probably agree that I helped shape the character of the Doctor over the first half-dozen episodes. Now I think that everybody gets it. The idea was very clear in my mind what that voice was; but it was very hard to communicate to people. Now it's quite clear.”

So clear, in fact, that so many freelancers pitch Doctor stories that the producers have a backlog. “I've heard them say it was difficult to write for my character and now as time goes on I'm hearing about how many of the writers who come in to pitch involve my character. I'm flattered to hear that. Several months ago when Rick Berman put his arm around me and said, 'You are going to be such a popular character,' I looked at him like he was from another planet. I thought he was being nice and flattering, but I truly didn't understand what he was saying. Of course, he better than anyone on the face of the globe understands the STAR TREK audience, so he must have been telling the truth. This happy alchemy between what was handed me and what I'm doing with it seems to be happening.”

All that remains is to find the Doctor a name. While all the scripts and bible refer to him as Doctor Zimmerman, the producers couldn't decide how long to draw out the nagging question. Some scenes filmed using the name were later reshot, to enable the mystery to be extended. In the Doctor's first featured episode, “Heroes and Demons” he chooses the name Schweitzer, only to change his mind. “This idea of what my name is going to be has captured the audience's imagination,” said Picardo. “[The producers] are going to have fun with it for a while and there is no guarantee they will name me by the end of the season although I suspect they will.” □

seems foolish. What other kind of new stories can you tell with another male captain? What other kind of new man can you find?

"Captain Janeway turned out to be commanding without being bitchy, strong without being intimidating. I was one who said early on, 'I hope that by the 24th century women didn't have to behave like men in order to make decisions of power and responsibility.' And I'm gratified that much of the mail picks up on the fact that she is able to be authoritative and still retains the qualities of a woman. It's not like she's Picard in drag. She is vulnerable, compassionate, sensitive, and nurturing and her gender is not an issue. No one ever thinks or refers to her on any terms that would indicate that the fact she is a woman and a captain makes any difference. By that time it doesn't."

With the center chair filled, the producers turned their attentions to the rest of the VOYAGER crew, ever mindful of the importance of balancing the sexes, earth nationalities, and alien species involved. This stage was crucial, for while the tone and premise of a series can evolve—and in fact

take on a life of its own through the first couple seasons—the characters must remain consistent. Likewise, as the terrain of STAR TREK stories, from time travel to space anomalies, has been well trod, new characters would bring fresh insights and drama to these tried and true scenarios. Brannon Braga, TNG's story editor and



Jeri Taylor, one of three co-exec producers.

VOYAGER's producer was stimulated by VOYAGER's "new situations, new aliens, new characters."

Noted Taylor, "We spent an endless amount of time trying to come up with characters. That was the hardest part, because if you consider the original series, TNG and DS9, there have been various combinations and permutations of all kinds of aliens and ethnicities on earth and in order not to repeat ourselves—which we were desperately trying not to do—it seemed like we would start down a road and say 'Oh, wait a minute, that is exactly like so and so.'

"Since we knew we wanted a starship, we needed to put people on it. We really started by position, by who's on the bridge—a captain, a first officer, con, tactical. We knew those positions and then we started mixing and matching. One of the first decisions we made was to use a Native American. That was something we didn't come into the project knowing, but as we began to

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# STAR TREK VOYAGER

## DESIGNING THE BRIDGE

*The ship's most crucial set arose from 30 years of TREK expertise.*

By Dale Kutzera

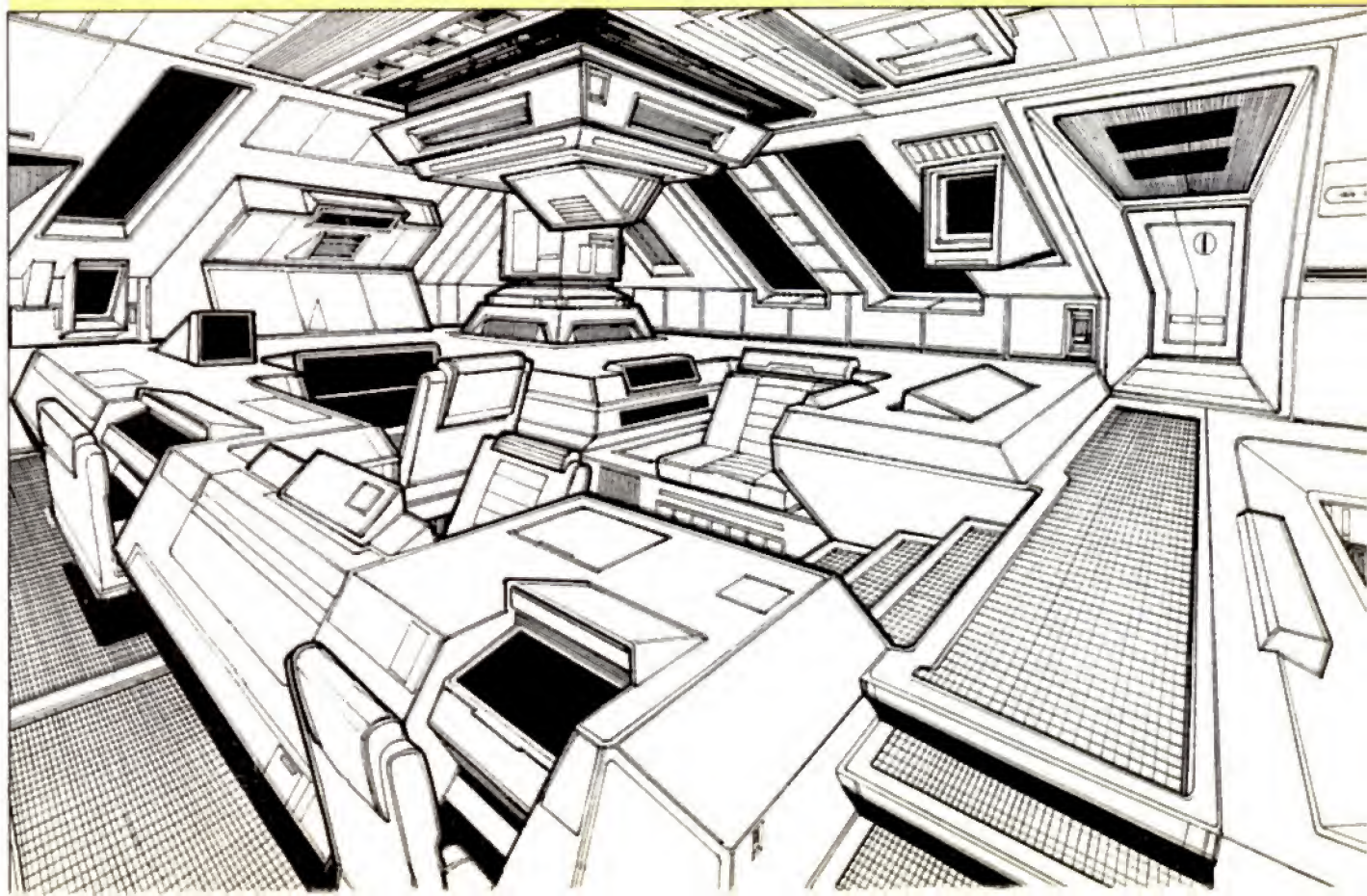
Designing the *Voyager* bridge, the ship's most crucial set might have been more difficult had production designer Richard James and technical consultant Rick Sternbach not had 30 years of STAR TREK history to draw from. James, a veteran of the science fiction genre worked the sets of BATTLESTAR GALACTICA and joined the staff of TNG in its second season. The challenge was to reinterpret the familiar look and feel of Starfleet technology in a new and interesting way. "I wanted to really start off with far-out ideas," said James, "just to get feedback from these concepts. I wanted to leave no stone unturned, where everything was on the table. We had a blank piece of paper. Let's see how far-out we can go and see if there might be wonderful con-

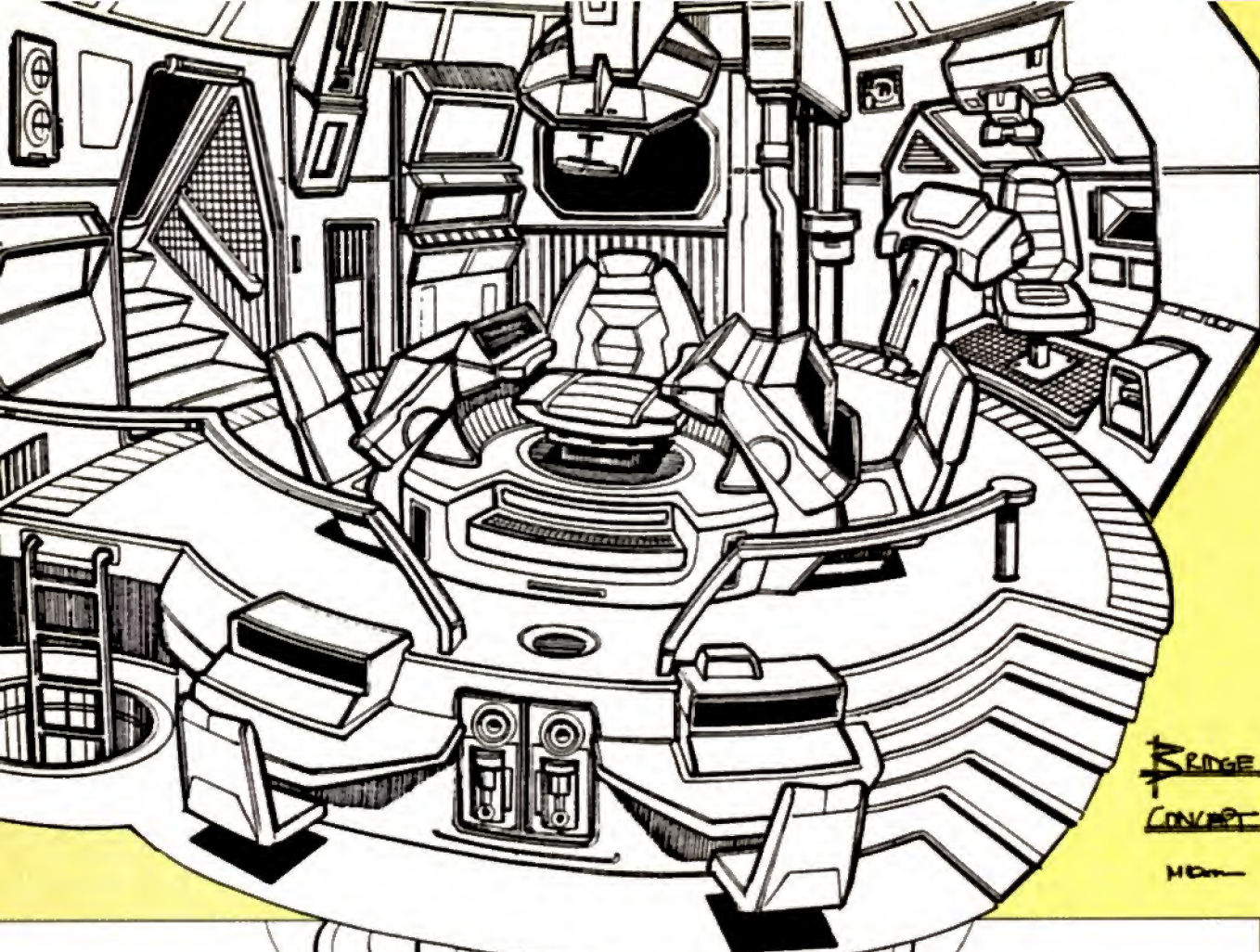
cepts there. It's pretty funny to go back and look at the first ideas, but I wanted to see if we could jar anything loose."

James would have over \$1.5 million to spend creating the VOYAGER sets. The first step in designing *Voyager* was to get a handle on the exterior and the critical bridge set. "I felt that once we could get that accomplished then it would drive the look of all the other sets," said James. "The exterior look and the concepts for the bridge went hand in hand and were all being presented at the same time to the producers."

James' designs for the bridge continued the traditional circular configuration established in the original series. Although one early concept was to place the viewscreen not to the front, but to one side of the set, the producers felt the audience appreciates the clearly established sense of direction a for-

An early bridge concept by design illustrator Jim Martin. Production designer Richard James began the design process with complete departures from the *Enterprise*-style bridge, without viewscreens.





“I wanted to start off with far-out ideas, leave no stone unturned with everything on the table. We began with a blank sheet of paper.”

—Designer Richard James—

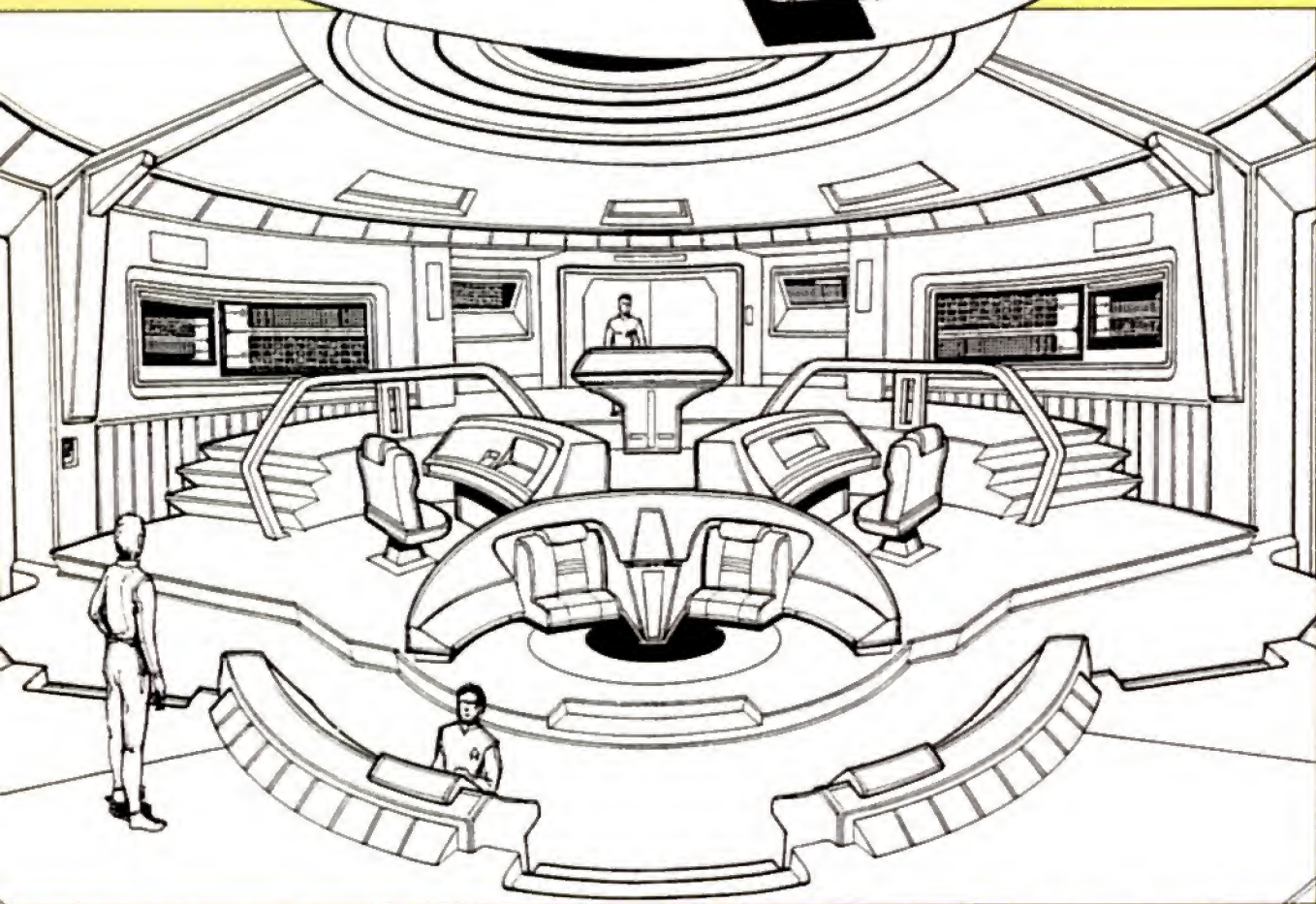
wild and whole sections can be moved away. We call them user-friendly sets.”

One change in particular was welcomed by Rick Kolbe, who directed the pilot. “On the old bridge, everybody was facing the walls except the three guys who were driving the ship. And so you always wind up with a situation where somebody at science had to face those wall panels and act away from the audience. So they would sit in a profile position to turn around like in a badly staged play. It really looked funny. We now have ops and tach where we can shoot either way, although it takes some time to take the walls out—it is crowded back there.”

Once the *Voyager*'s exterior shape and bridge were underway, James could focus on the other key sets. Like the bridge, they were variations on an established STAR TREK theme. “Obviously we have to have engineering, a transporter room, a sick bay, quarters, the ready room, and the briefing room. A mess hall took the place of Ten Forward. There is a lounge area in Janeway's ready room where she can sit on a sofa and have a more informal conversation.”

In each instance, a somewhat darker color scheme with chrome and plexiglass were used to differentiate this vessel from the bright beige interiors of the *Enterprise*. “That's a very conscious effort and quite a lengthy process,” said James. “We wanted to be different in color than TNG and not to have the same look as DS9. That limits what's available. Basically we have a more metallic look, a cooler look to get away from the warm colors. And we won't be lighting it as brightly. There will be pools of darkness.”

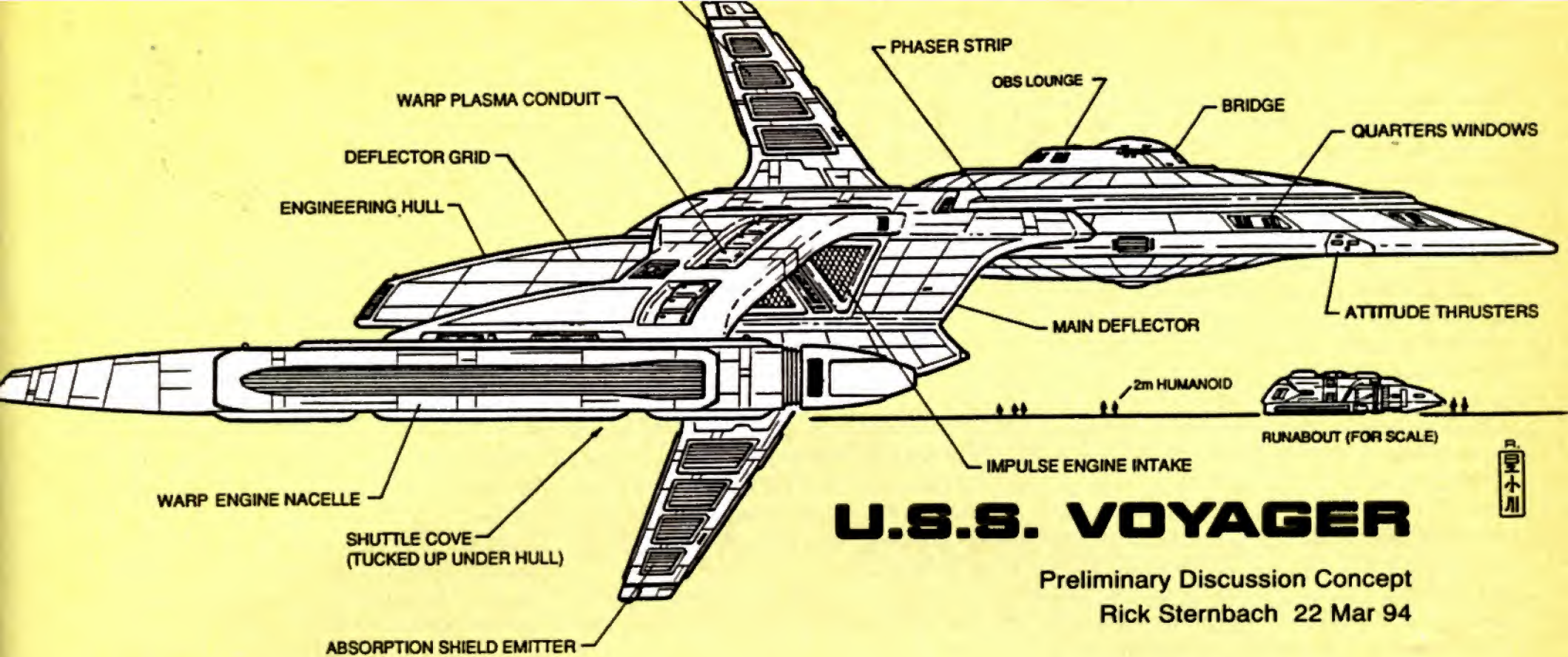
The one holdover from the *Enterprise* was the maze of corridors that connected one standing set to another. Even there improvements were made. “The corridor just evolved,” said James. “It has been extended for *Voyager*, and engineering now has a corridor to the entrance whereas before we didn't really have a direct entrance to engineering. Engineering also has its own turbo-lift that is inside the set. On NEXT GENERATION we used a turn-around set of a medical lab a lot and so for this new set we created a sickbay and lab combination and it is a permanent standing set.” □



Voyager bridge concepts by Jim Martin, exploring production designer Richard James' universe of possibilities, above close to final design. Below: Detail of the Voyager model showing how the external bridge configuration at top matched the sets. Janeway's ready room on left, conference room on right.



ward-facing viewscreen provides. Several other changes and improvements were made, however, based on the seven years of experience on NEXT GENERATION. “We have gone with a much smaller viewscreen,” said James. “And I think we gave a more permanent look to the pilot station. He's really isolated now and he's driving the ship. I went for several levels on the bridge. There are two or three that people go up and down. I think people look awkward coming down ramps, so they were not considered. The old bridge didn't have very many wild walls and was very limited. On the *Voyager*'s bridge practically all the walls are

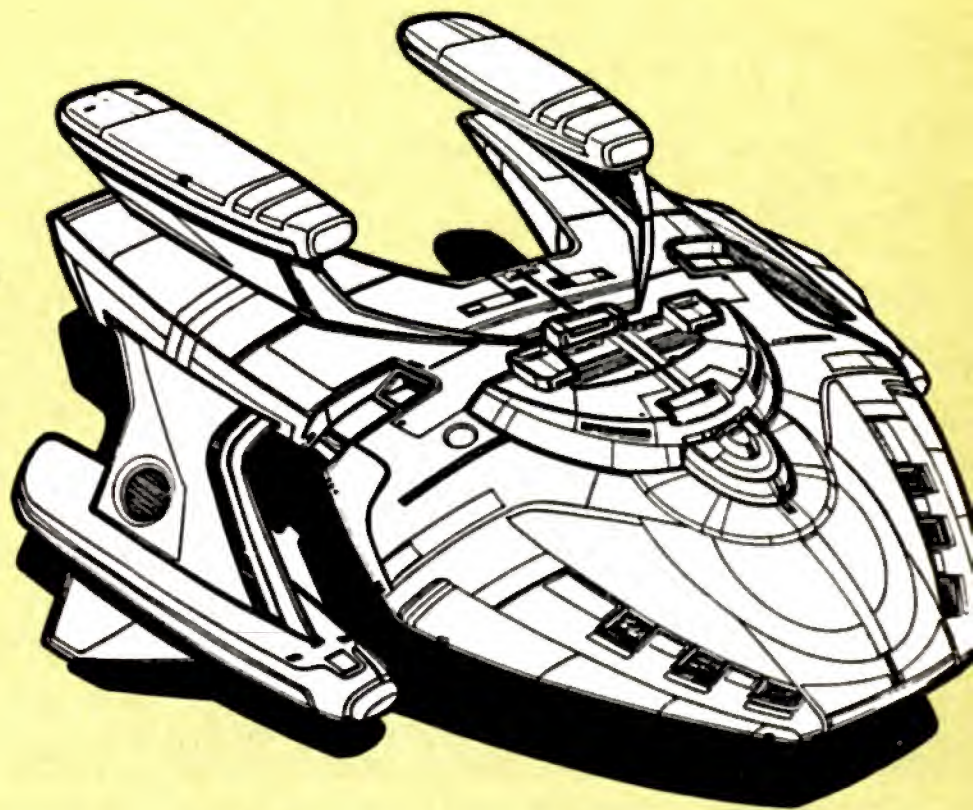
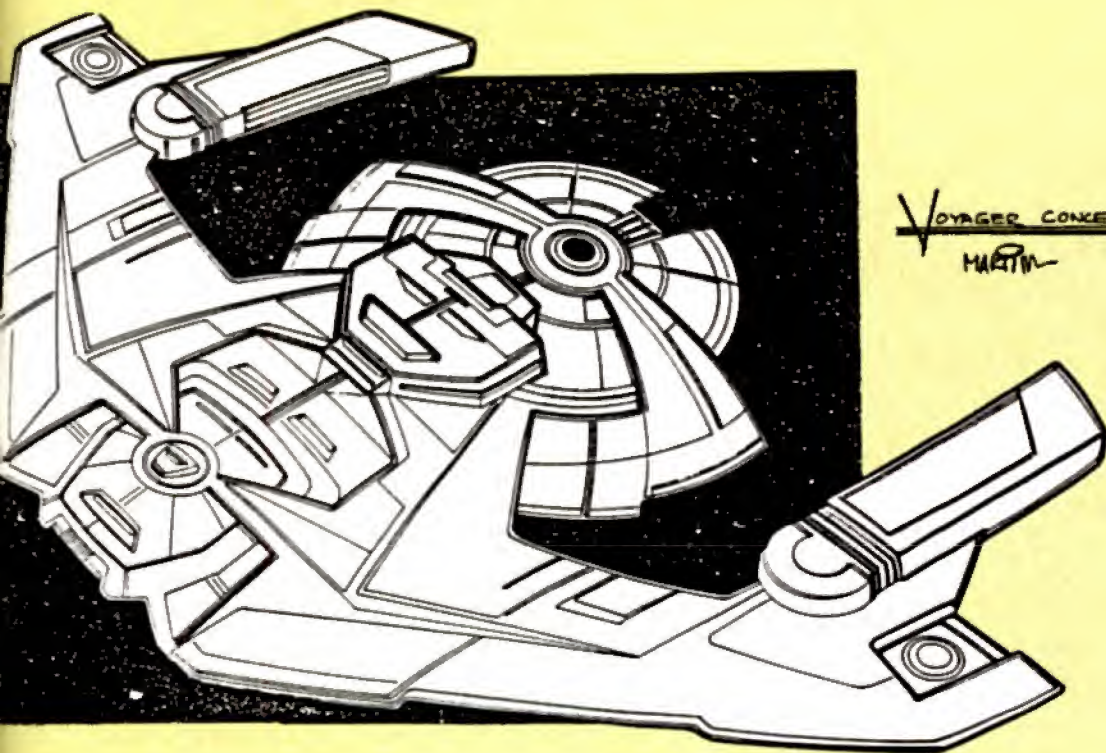


# U.S.S. VOYAGER

Preliminary Discussion Concept

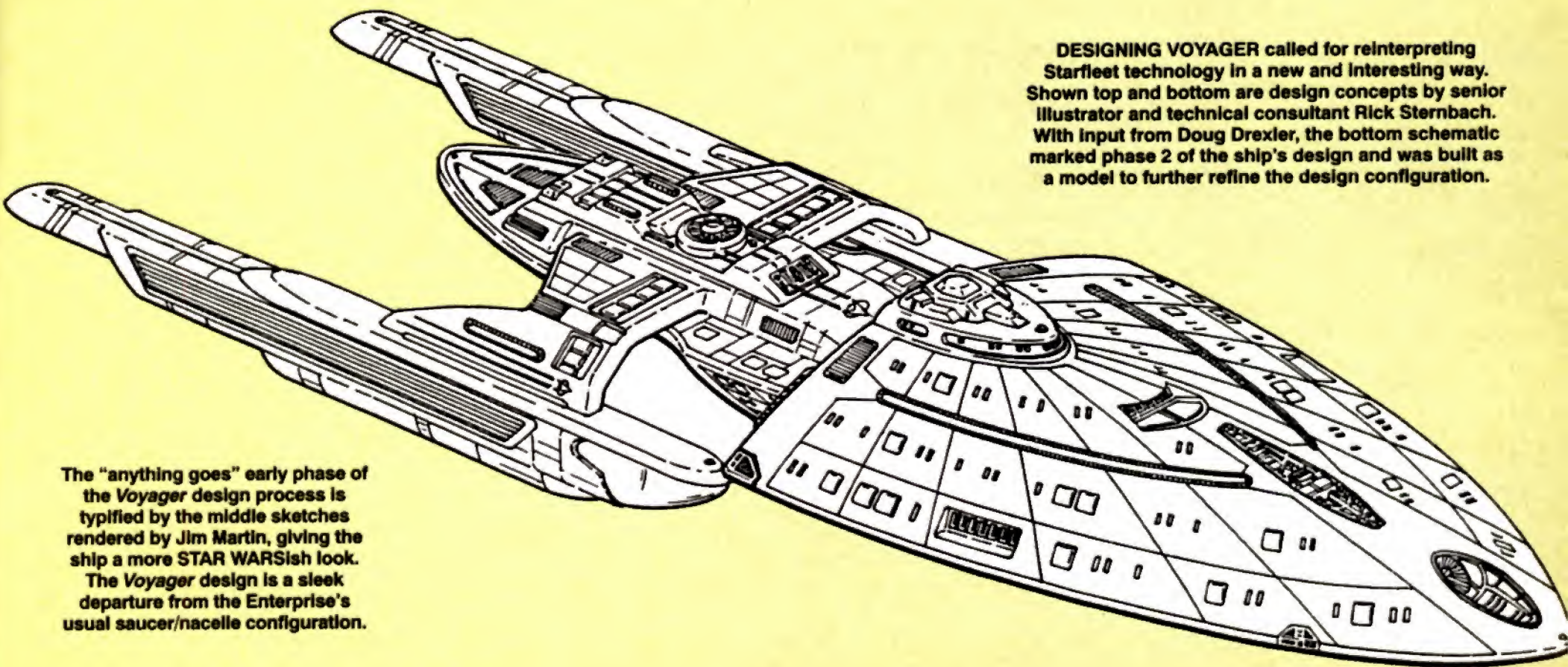
Rick Sternbach 22 Mar 94

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DESIGNING VOYAGER called for reinterpreting Starfleet technology in a new and interesting way. Shown top and bottom are design concepts by senior illustrator and technical consultant Rick Sternbach. With input from Doug Drexler, the bottom schematic marked phase 2 of the ship's design and was built as a model to further refine the design configuration.

The "anything goes" early phase of the Voyager design process is typified by the middle sketches rendered by Jim Martin, giving the ship a more STAR WARSish look. The Voyager design is a sleek departure from the Enterprise's usual saucer/nacelle configuration.



talk, we realized that was a highly under-represented minority and hoped that in the same way Uhura in the original series became such an inspiration for disenfranchised blacks, that a Native America would be one as well."

The emotional tone of a character, such as irascible or logical, was not nearly as important as identifying a compelling backstory that offered dramatic potential. "We tried to create characters who had an inner life, who had a conflict, and who had complexities in their lives," said Taylor. "So rather than giving them just one characteristic which gets tiresome very quickly, they would have an entire panoply of characteristics that we could do the work with. It took a long time to find fresh characters that didn't conflict with some of the others, but we never thought in any terms other than having them in the Alpha Quadrant and having adventures like [the other series] did, but it felt a little stale. Something was missing here, not working."

### STRANGE NEW WORLD

As the conceptualization process continued, the trio tossed one idea after another into the pot. The one that rose to the surface stemmed from the TNG episode, "Q Who?" in which Q thrusts the *Enterprise* to the far end of the galaxy where the crew first encounters the Borg. At the end of that show, Q whisks them back to Federation space. The what-if premise behind VOYAGER is that the ship isn't returned to familiar space. The crew is stuck 70,000 light years from home, in a part of the universe filled with "strange new worlds, new life, and new civilizations." The fresh terrain and continual need for self-reliance were more reminiscent of

**“In the same way that Uhura in the original series became such an inspiration for blacks, we hoped that a Native American would too.”**

—Producer Jeri Taylor—

the original series than TNG. Where the later series dwelt in a settled, civilized corner of the galaxy, VOYAGER would be charting new territory. A sense of adventure, hope, and peril were all built into the backbone of the show.

"One of the reasons we wanted a female captain was that it would force us into fresh storytelling, not allow us to repeat ourselves," said Taylor. "And we felt that maybe the same is true of our franchise, maybe we have to go boldly not just with that choice of a woman, but to take an even scarier step and cut our ties with everything that is familiar. No more Starfleet, no more Romulans, Klingons, and Cardassians. Nothing in the very familiar neighborhood. We are back in unexplored space, sort of like the old series, we don't have Starfleet around the corner or a starbase we can refuel at. We [the producers] all went 'gulp' and looked at each other and knew it was the right way to go."

Noted Piller, "From the moment you realize that you are dealing with survival, and you are trying on every level to get back home that's an enormous emotional under-

pinning for every story you tell. It changes everything. You're alone out there. That means a considerably different reaction to every circumstance you face. So that's going to make it different all the way."

In response to another frequent criticism of TNG, that the crew simply got along too well, the producers sought to build in a level of tension within the VOYAGER crew. Drawing on the established lore of the Bajoran and Cardassian conflict, they created a neutral zone, the forced eviction of settlers, and the resulting rag-tag army of rebel fighters known as the Maquis. Taking advantage of their existing series, they wove this backstory for VOYAGER into the TNG episodes "Journey's End" and "Preemptive Strike" and the DS9 episodes "The Maquis I and II." VOYAGER begins then, with the sleek vessel sent to find a missing Maquis ship, apparently lost in a stormy part of the galaxy known as the Badlands. There they are caught in an energy wave and whisked 70,000 light years from Federation space.

Needless to say, the producers were not the only ones gulping. When the concept was presented to the Paramount management, it raised more than a few eyebrows. "When we said that we want a woman captain and everything familiar is gone, Kerry McCluggage, the president of the studio stared at us and said, 'That's scary,'" recalled Taylor. "But he was tantalized by it. They had to think about it for a while, because it was a gamble. These are big risks that you take. People had become very much in love with STAR TREK as it was and we were taking it all away from them. It could have had a backlash."

Noted Taylor, "You can absolutely do

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## ENGINEER B'ELANNA TORRES



Roxann Biggs-Dawson as Klingon Chief Engineer, a half-human ally of Chakotay's Maquis contingent.

From the VOYAGER bible:

*The Chief Engineer has a facade that's worked well for her: tough knowledgeable, able to take care of herself, bothered by nothing. In fact, beneath the surface there dwells a person confused and at war with herself. B'Elanna has a mixed heritage—Klingon and human—that she deplures. Her Klingon side is disturbing to her; she makes every effort to suppress it, preferring to develop her human side. She distrusts the feelings her Klingon blood produces, and wishes that, like Tuvok, she could achieve total control of them.*

*B'Elanna has grown into a fetching young beauty with an incandescent sexuality. She turns many heads, but the person she has designs on is Tom Paris, who*

*won't clutter their professional relationship by having an affair with another officer.*

Mindful of the fact that VOYAGER's premise takes away much of the known STAR TREK universe, the creators sought to place at least a few familiar aliens in the crew's ranks. Considering how many dramatic possibilities the brooding Worf brought to TNG, it's little surprise they chose a Klingon. "We always felt Klingons gave us such wonderfully rich stories, because they are such an interesting, complex kind of culture," said Taylor. "But how could we do something that wasn't repeating Worf? We finally came up with the notion of doing someone a little more like K'Ehleyr and having a female who was half human and at war with her

Klingon side which gives a nice arc for her to explore."

They found their combination of Klingon spit-fire and human sensuality in Roxann Biggs-Dawson, who was one of the first to read for the part. Although the producers read other actresses, none came close to Biggs-Dawson, the first actor taken to the studio for approval and the first to sign on the starship *Voyager*. In addition to lead roles in such features as DARKMAN II and BOUND BY HONOR, Biggs-Dawson has also appeared in GUILTY BY SUSPICION. Her television credits include NBC's ROUND TABLE and NIGHTINGALES, USA Network's MORTAL SINS and DIRTY WORK, and Paramount's THE UNTOUCHABLES. Dale Kutzera

# STAR TREK VOYAGER

## SPECIAL VISUAL EFFECTS

*Producer Dan Curry heads-up two effects teams alternating on challenging weekly assignments.*

*By Dale Kutzera*

The first thing you learn about the STAR TREK special visual effects team is they are seldom in their office. Don't bother to leave a message on their voice-mail either. They never have time to check it. Effects people, it seems, are why pagers were invented. Whether on stage advising first unit photography, supervising second unit blue screen work, or scattered across Los Angeles at any one of a dozen effects suppliers, the effects crew is always on the run.

Marshaling this dedicated team is visual effects producer Dan Curry, who, over the years, has refined the task of creating starships, nebulas, phaser fights, and space battles into a remarkably smooth-running operation. Planning and executing the effects for VOYAGER are two teams which roughly alternate episodes. Visual effects supervisor David Stipes and visual effects coordinator Joe Bauer form one team while supervisor Ron B. Moore

[not to be confused with DS9 producer Ron D. Moore] and coordinator Michael Backauskas form the other. Two additional teams, also under Curry's supervision, handle the effects for DS9 (see article on page 104). Through VOYAGER's maiden season, Curry was also assisted by series coordinator Phil Barberio and effects associates Edward Williams and Laura Lang (Williams has since been promoted to series coordinator, replacing Barberio who has left the series.)

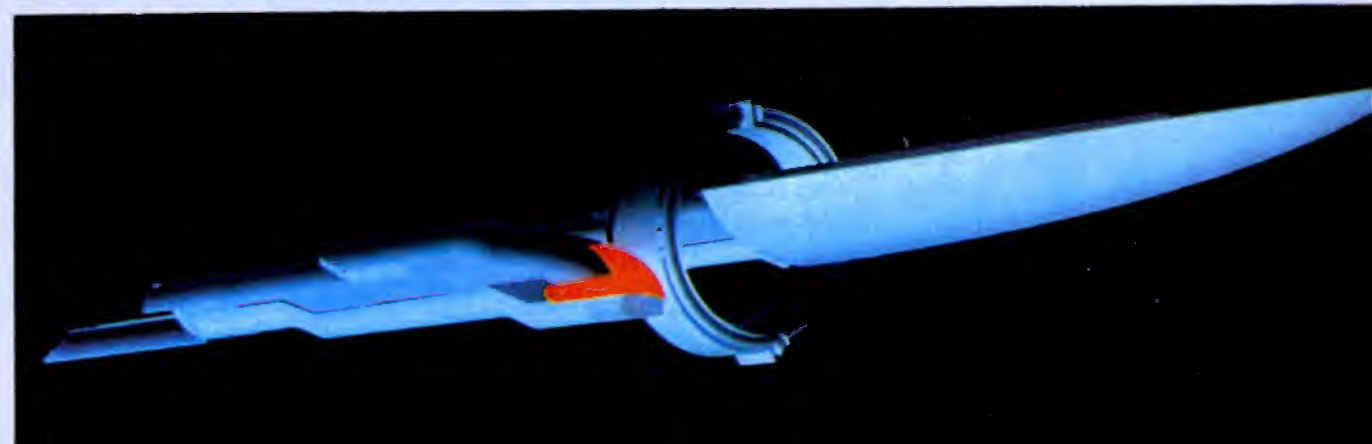
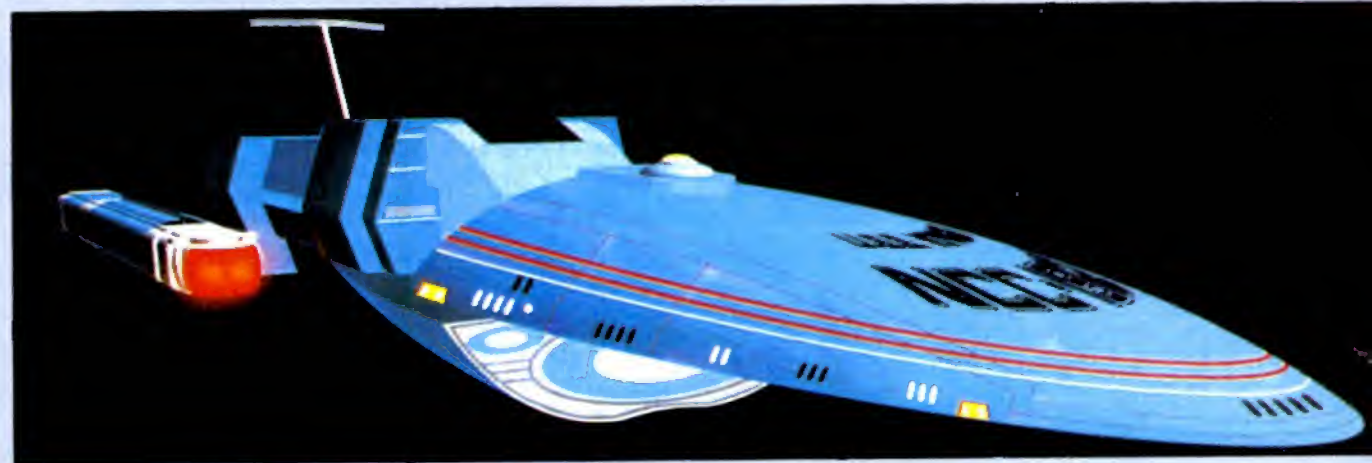
The job of the visual effects supervisor, according to Curry, "is to get a script and determine what techniques to use to bring



Producer Peter Lauritson heads post-production.



Special effects producer Dan Curry and effects supervisor David Stipes plan angles on the Voyager. Below: Computer models of design concepts considered during the ship's design phase. Curry sought a size balance in the model that would make it fully detailed but easy to shoot for motion-control work.





The Sikarians of "Prime Factors," with the technology to "fold space" and get *Voyager* home, but not as benevolent as they seem.

as to why Tuvok did this. The number one reason is because of his relationship with Janeway—realizing that she had difficulty in doing this, but that her primary goal was to get us home. I decided to sacrifice my commission in order to achieve the goal. This was an act of sacrifice which, I think, is not un-Vulcan-like. After all, 'The needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few.'

"The second reason was that as security officer on board, if I didn't do it there could have been some serious problems. They are on a lifeboat in the middle of no place and are not worried about what happens when they arrive back home. For all intents and purposes they may never see home. And so, it is like a pirate ship; if the captain doesn't bring in enough gold, she ain't the captain any more. All [the writers] wanted to do in that show was make you sit up. That's all. They didn't appreciate the intricacies of this character. They just wanted to surprise you."

Whatever the justification, the climactic confrontation between Tuvok and Janeway is the kind of raw, genuinely revealing scene we seldom saw in TNG or DS9. Janeway's speech is not the kind of preachy sermon Jean Luc Picard often doled out, but comes from a real person in a lot of emotional pain. The teleplay was written by two freelance writers, Michael Perricone & Greg Elliot, from a story by David R. George III and Eric A. Stillwell (whose place in TREK history is already secured by his sole previous writing credit—the story for TNG's "Yesterday's Enterprise").

"Why would anyone on this ship betray us? We are all in this together."  
—Janeway

**STATE OF FLUX** ★★1/2

4/10/95. Production number: 111. Stardate: 48658.2. Teleplay by Chris Abbott. Story By Paul Robert Coyle. Directed by Robert Scheerer.

While scouting an M-class planet for foodstuffs,

Chakotay and Seska (Martha Hackett), his former lover, involved in the smuggling of a replicator off the ship in "State of Flux."



The *Voyager* model mounted for motion-control filming at Image G. Above: The *Voyager* in action, battling Kazon fighters in "State of Flux" (left) and with a friendly Sikarian vessel in "Prime Factors."

that shot into existence. They will design the shots and if it's something that entails motion control, supervise that photography. Their responsibility also involves going to the stage and working with the director and director of photography on shots such as beam outs, phaser blasts, and blue-screen shots."

Curry, in turn, is responsible for the overall look of the show, often designing recurring effects such as phasers and transporters. Although he is director of second unit photography, and is ultimately responsible for insuring that each effects shot on VOYAGER and DEEP SPACE NINE meets the satisfaction of the executive producers, Curry is not above rolling up his sleeves and creating effects himself, particularly if it involves his area of expertise, matte painting.

With three episodes in various stages of design, photography, and post-production at any one time, each two-person team tackles the artistic, logistical, and budgetary challenges of each show, often splitting up to cover different tasks at different locations.

"For example, I was doing the stage work for one episode, but at the same time we were finishing up post-production on another," said David Stipes. "So Joe [Bauer] was at Digital Magic putting together shots while I was supervising the stage shots. Dan Curry may just as easily have been doing that, but he was busy with second unit directing and designing the last show with Ron Moore. We all have got enough work for two people all the time. When I need to bi-locate or clone myself it comes out looking like Joe Bauer. Joe has been a tremendous talent. He's won awards for commercial work back east; he's a director of music videos, a DP on a low-budget feature film; he did stop-motion animation, and was the effects coordinator on SPACE RANGERS. I'm fortunate and Paramount is fortunate to have him."

The effects teams, along with scores of outside model makers, matte painters, and computer animators, manage to turn the average episode budget of \$80,000 into 50 to 100 eye-popping effects shots. And they do it, on average, 26 times a season. Of course, this 16-episode premiere season of STAR TREK: VOYAGER was hardly average.

(Twenty episodes were actually filmed consecutively, but four were held to air at the beginning of VOYAGER's second season.) In addition to creating a completely new ship and a completely unknown area of the galaxy, Curry and company faced the daunting task of shooting an effects-laden two-hour pilot, all while Ron B. Moore was winding down his work on STAR TREK: GENERATIONS.

As the *Voyager* was under construction—both physically and digitally (see page 79)—the VOYAGER visual effects team took up residence at the motion-control studio Image G. Their task was to create the numerous shots of the *Voyager* for the effects-laden pilot. Starting with a Styrofoam model of the ship, they tested various angles and planned movements. For each shot of the spaceship, multiple passes are required: a matte pass, internal lights pass, engine pass, and "beauty" pass of the ship. Each camera movement is programmed into the motion-control computer, which can repeat the move precisely for each pass. "You figure each ship has at least four or five passes and some as many as nine to twelve passes," said Curry, "and if you have five ships in the shot some shots may represent 30, 40, 50 or more pieces. We set up a big board with all the storyboards on it at Image G, and as we made progress through the show we checked off each piece."

The practice is further complicated when two ships interact, as with the *Voyager* at the Caretaker array. Shot separately, the rel-

Jim Rider, David Stipes, Joe Bauer and effects producer Dan Curry use Styrofoam mock-ups at Image G to plan the space battle with Kazon ships in "Ex Post Facto," final composite shown below.







“Figure each ship has at least four passes, with some as many as 12, so some shots may represent 30, 40, 50 or more pieces.”

—Producer Dan Curry—

ative size and scale of each model must be considered. While the *Voyager* ship is a fraction of the size of the array, the *Voyager* model was larger than the array model. “The ships are not in real scale to one another,” said Curry. “A five-foot ship may have to be 1/15 the size of a three foot ship so the math required to make sure all the camera moves are scaled so everything moves properly is profound. For example, the array is six feet long, which was supposed to be many times the size of the ships. While the huge Kazon mother-ship was 3/5ths the size of the *Voyager* model.”

The climactic crash into the Kazon ship was enhanced by flames and liquid nitrogen smoke filmed by Dan Curry and the Image G crew. “I rigged a box up in the air and cut a jagged hole in it with my pocket knife and let CO2 vapor spill out and blew it in different directions,” he said. “I know how I wanted the ships to move, so we shot the correct perspective and then Adam Howard, our Harry paint-box artist, tracked that on the surface of the ships. If you notice on a lot of those we were careful about directive lighting. We not only shot the beauty pass, but we shot the shadows on the ship passing through the shadow of the array. We would shoot light passes that would show the ship illuminated from the light source of either a flame or an explosion so that you could see light changing on the ship even though we

did all those pieces one at a time.”

Curry was also busy creating new and improved standard effects for the *Voyager* transporter. “We were thinking about changing the transporter effect, figuring that Starfleet would have upgraded it,” said Curry. “The features all had their own different effect and we tried working with some of the CGI houses to see if we could make the transporter effect a 3-D effect. We felt that the results we were getting were very mechanical looking and we kept looking back on our original transporter effect, particularly our sparkle element. That has such a nice organic feel that we wound up modifying the existing transporter effect where we retained our traditional sparkle that gave us a nice sense of continuity, but we used an element that Amblin created for us of the glowing balls of light that go up or down. We also dropped what we called the shower curtain element which always looked very flat to me.”

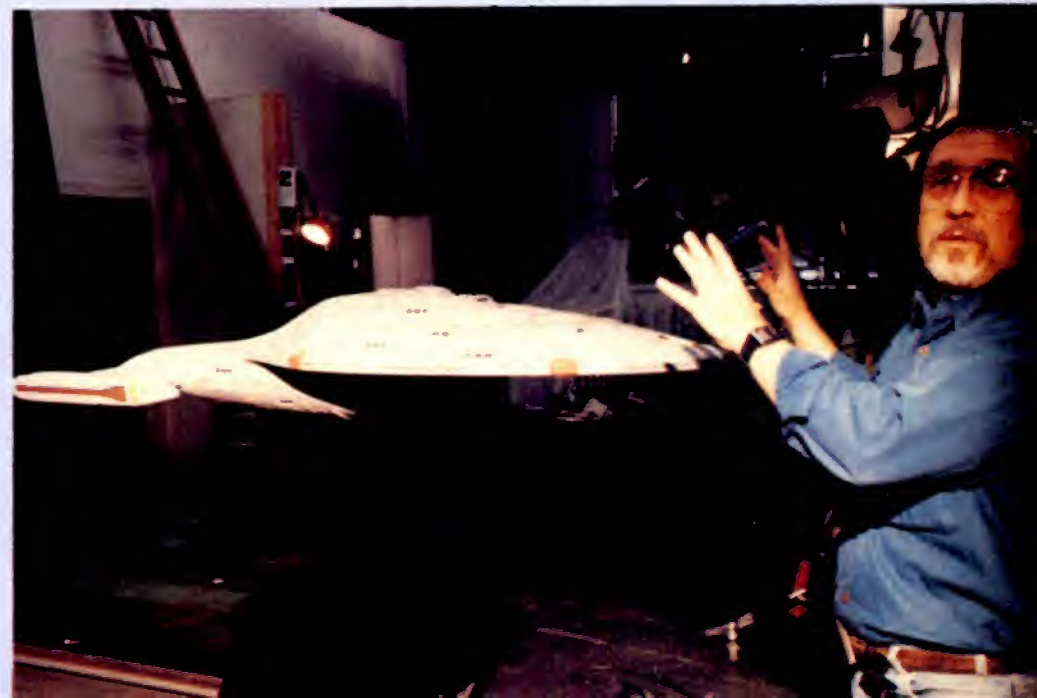
CGI, along with trick elements, motion control, blue screen, Harry animation, and various other digital post-production tricks is but one piece of the STAR TREK effects puzzle. All the pieces are finessed, tweaked, and finally composited into the finished shot seen in the show. Obviously, the more pieces there are to play with in the compositing bay, the more control you have over the final image. STAR TREK’s CGI

vendors provide multiple passes of the virtual *Voyager*, just as Image G does of the model. This way, when the sequences are assembled, further adjustments can be made such as increasing the contrast of the “beauty” pass or bumping up the intensity of the window or engine lights. To make sure the pieces all fit together, digital information is shared between vendors whenever necessary. Data from a motion-control camera move from Image G maybe be sent to Amblin, or an Amblin CGI *Voyager* shot may be sent to Santa Barbara for inclusion in their backgrounds.

The pilot’s seething cauldron of vapors, known as the badlands, was a mixture of high-tech and low-tech ingenuity. Curry designed the sequence to include panning camera moves, something difficult to achieve with nitrogen smoke elements filmed on a soundstage. A 3-D environment, created by Amblin Imaging, along with information from the motion-control photogra-



At Image G effects supervisor David Stipes (l) and producer Dan Curry review storyboards prior to shooting. Below: Curry works with the *Voyager* model on Image G’s motion control effects stage.





Stipes used cardboard to mock-up additional detail on a Kazon fighter (inset). Below: Effects coordinator Joe Bauer works with a large scale section of the Kazon ship filmed at Image G.



As Curry and Stipes continued work on the pilot, the rest of the VOYAGER staff began tackling the regular schedule of hour-long episodes. The late start of shooting for the pilot, and 11th-hour reshooting of the feature film, forced Curry to perform some creative staff juggling. "Phil [Barberio]'s involvement often involves logistical organization—making sure the two series don't get in each other's way," he said. "Because of the intensity of the pilot, Phil supervised one of the early episodes so that David Stipes would be available to work with me through the completion of 'Caretaker.' So the first episode that was to be David's went to Phil and the second went to Joe Bauer. Ron Moore was finishing up the feature so he couldn't be too involved with the VOYAGER pilot. Everybody was stretched pretty thin."

Over the years, the effects team has refined the budgeting process to a precise degree. They know that an hour for transfers is going to cost \$750, that every hour of blue-screen transfers is going to be \$1,100, and that an editing bay costs \$12 per minute. Even one standard phaser fire has a projected pricetag of \$3,580. "If the budget is too high we have another budget meeting and these budgets are turned in and they [Rick Berman and the other producers] may say no," said Barberio. "The writer is also there and can make sweeping changes in the script to allow us to do certain things. It's easy to say 25 ships come in shooting phasers but they need to give us enough time to do that or it gets out of hand." □

phy by Image G, allowed him to move with the ships in this space. "The plasma storm was a combination of CGI and high-speed photography of liquid nitrogen over black velvet. The CGI vortexes were not working for us as well as we hoped, so we went back in and took liquid nitrogen and mixed it with the CGI elements to give it back some of the organic qualities we were looking for." The elements were painstakingly composited and finessed by editor Don Greenberg at Digital Magic.

Motion-control rigger Chris Schnitzer (left) prepares a Maquis fighter at Image G and visual effects supervisor Glenn Neufeld and coordinator David Takemura read the light on a Cardassian ship for DS9.



Chakotay and Seska are ambushed by several Kazon. Beamed safely back on board, the crew later responds to a distress call from the Kazon ship. Several Kazon crew members have been killed and wounded in trying to install a federation replicator smuggled off of the *Voyager*. As Janeway searches for the traitor, all clues point to Seska, Chakotay's former lover.

"State of Flux" places Chakotay center stage just in time, as the character seemed to be suffering from Riker's disease, the dreaded syndrome in which first officers fade into the wallpaper. Not much chance of that happening here as Robert Beltran brings a calm, centered power to the role of Chakotay. Martha Hackett as Seska, up until now a background player, conveys a friendly engaging personality that I imagine we will see more of. My one gripe is that they had to make Seska a Cardassian in disguise, an unnecessary revelation. Aren't Bajoran's capable of devious underhanded behavior?



Doc Zimmerman has his first romantic encounter with Freya (Marjorie Monaghan) in "Heroes & Demons," the Beowulf saga set on the holodeck.

"Such fables are necessary only in cultures which unduly emphasize emotional behavior."

—Tuvok

## HEROES & DEMONS

★★★★

4/24/95. Production number: 112. Stardate: 48693.2. Written by Naren Shankar. Directed by Les Landau.

When an alien life form takes over the holodeck and transforms crew members into pure energy, the ship's holographic Doctor is sent in to the rescue. He finds himself smack dab in the middle of the Beowulf holo-novel, designed by Ensign Kim, complete with Freya (Marjorie Monaghan), Unferth (Christopher Neame), and Hrothgar (Michael Keenan). The monster Grendel, of course, is the CGI-created alien entity. As the only *Voyager* member able to face this alien being, the Doctor must explore the limits of his programmed behavior and reach beyond them to save the missing crewmen.

Thank God for holodecks. Just when the series starts feeling a bit claustrophobic, art director Richard James is given a chance to show his stuff. In this case, a medieval forest and Viking dining hall provide a wonderful change of scenery and give Robert Picardo a chance to stretch his legs and take center stage. "I am extremely excited and proud of 'Heroes and Demons,'" said Picardo. "I am forced into a situation where I have to save the day and I get to be the hero. It's got a lot of humor, some swash-buckling adventure, and romance that you don't normally have in our show. There's even a gorgeous blond 6' 1" female warrior who takes a shine to the Doctor. So I even have my first romantic encounter."

Naren Shankar's script is both smart and witty ("All hail Schweitzer!"). This is the kind of episode that flaunts the top-notch production values STAR TREK series are capable of, from Marvin Rush's moon-, fire-, and candlelit photography to hair designer Josee Normand's exceptional work on those hairy, bearded Vikings.

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# STAR TREK VOYAGER

## TUVOK OF VULCAN

*Tim Russ on playing Janeway's right-hand man, picking up the torch of Leonard Nimoy as Spock.*

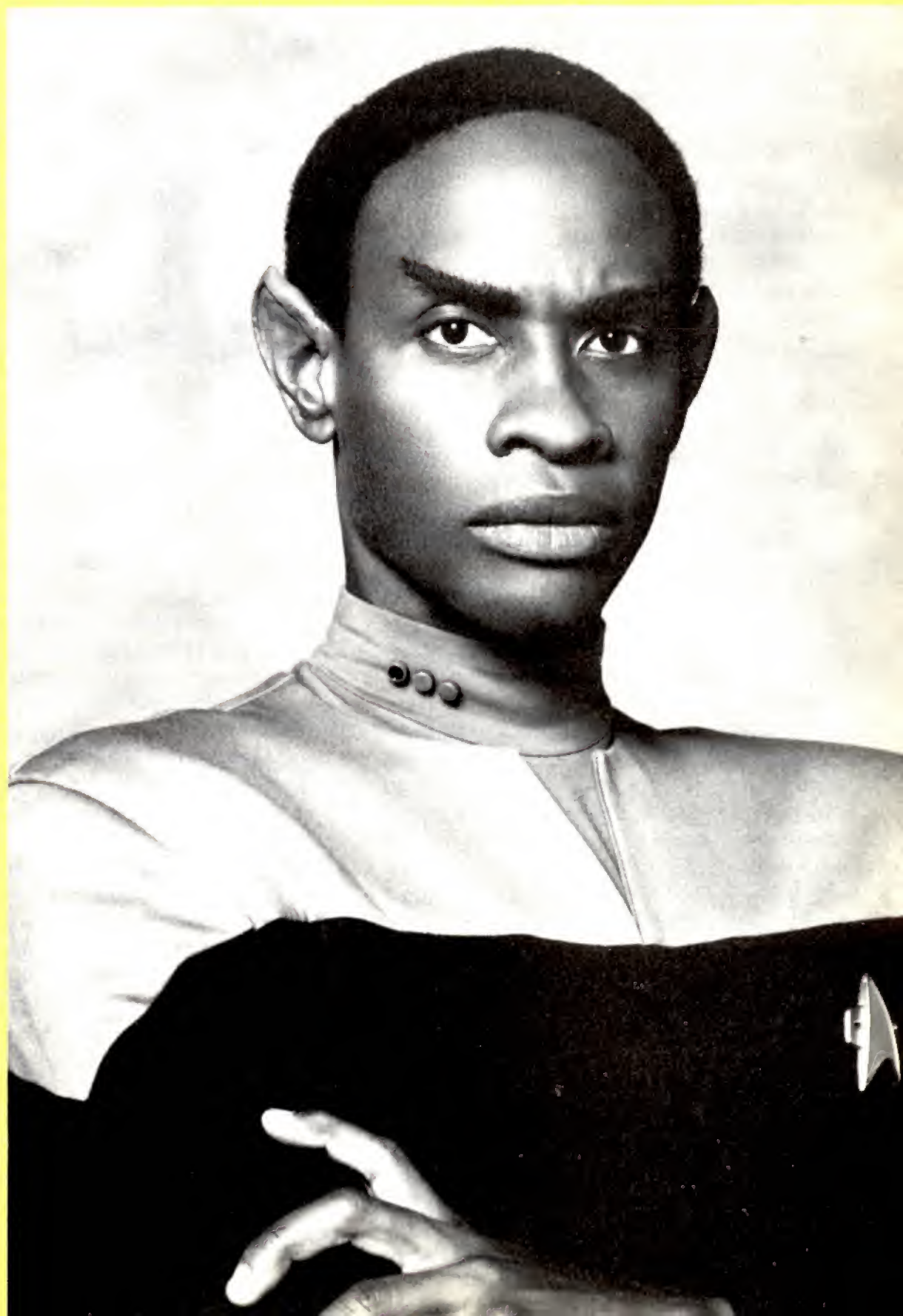
*By Dale Kutzera*

From the VOYAGER bible:

*The Vulcan Tactical/Security Officer is getting on in years—he's 160 (about 60 in human terms), but is as fit as people half his age. He is a powerful combination of maturity, wisdom, experience—and vitality. His Vulcan equanimity and patience serve him well in his role as the ship's peace-keeper, but it is his unofficial role which most binds him to the other crew members. His grandfatherly presence is comforting to many—particularly the young and head-strong B'Elanna... He married young, has four children (three of whom are Starfleet), and outlived his wife of 90 years. He has worked for Janeway for some time; they know each other well and have achieved the kind of comfortable relationship that comes with time and experience. She turns to him as a strong shoulder; she is the person he turns to when he needs one.*

In the whirlwind of long shooting hours, publicity duties, and TREK conventions, Tim Russ finds it hard to believe it has been just over a year since he was cast as Tuvok, the Vulcan confidant of Captain Janeway. For the 39-year-old Russ, the year has gone by quickly, so absorbed has he been in the task of carrying the Vulcan torch on STAR TREK. "The time seems to have gone by fairly quickly since we started shooting, because the days get rather long. I was talking to Roxann Biggs-Dawson, who is playing Torres—we auditioned the same day and were cast basically on the same day—she thinks it feels like a long time ago."

The character of Tuvok was created in part to give the audience a familiar alien among the strangers the *Voyager* will meet in the Delta Quadrant. Aware of the difficulties any actor would have in filling the shoes of Leonard Nimoy, the series creators sought to put a new spin on the Vulcans we have become familiar with. Just as TNG's Lt. Worf broadened the background of the Klingon empire to include a variety of skin tones, Lt. Tuvok would do the same for the Vulcans. "We came up with the wrinkle of making him a black Vulcan," said Jeri Taylor. "We had just used a black Romulan on TNG [in 'The Pegasus'] that we



Russ as Tuvok, Janeway's Vulcan Tactical Security Officer, conceived as an aged advisor. Russ's audition changed that.

thought was a nice touch. Subsequently I have learned we were not the first. In the third feature there was a black Vulcan priestess, so it was clearly established there were different colors of people on Vulcan."

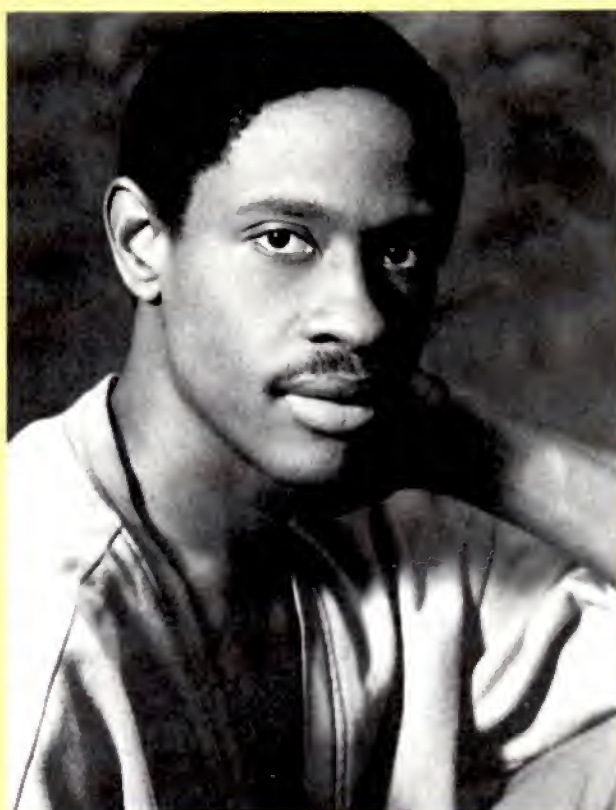
In Russ, the producers have not only found an articulate, cerebral actor, but a storehouse of knowledge on Vulcans as well. Russ is the only member of the VOYAGER cast to have been a long-time fan of the original series, and he is no stranger to the STAR TREK soundstages. Seven years ago he was a finalist for the part of Engineer Geordi LaForge. Rick Berman preferred him to LeVar Burton at the time, but Gene Roddenberry was the executive in charge and had final say. Berman never forgot about Russ, however, and took the young actor under his wing, providing the occasional acting assignment such as playing the Klingon in last season's DS9 episode "Invasive Procedures." Russ even read for the part of the then-black doctor on the DEEP SPACE NINE pilot, before the character of Sisko was cast as an African American. (The doctor role eventually went to Siddig El Fadil.) It was while working on a small speaking part in the STAR TREK: GENERATIONS feature, however, that Berman told Russ he wanted him to read for VOYAGER.

"I thought it would be a good idea to make myself available for that," said Russ. "And the only way you can do that is to not take any work that will overlap that period of time. It wasn't like I was a major celebrity and they would hold out and wait for me to be available. So I did not take any work for about three months. I did not audition for anything that was going to be shooting anywhere near that period of time. It is very much a calculated gamble as a career option. My agent and manager, for the most part, supported me, because they knew that this could be a major opportunity."

The gamble—trading a few months of unemployment for a chance at the several years of steady employment a STAR TREK series invariably guarantees—came to a disappointing end when the cast of characters for VOYAGER was distributed to agents. "When the breakdown came out the character description did not fit me," said Russ, "which is par for the course in this business. They were looking for an older character originally. I think they were specifically looking at Robert Guillaume. That is what I heard, somebody like him to play this character. So there was nothing in there for me to read. Consequently, I waited for a couple of weeks, read for some other things that were popping up, and I thought maybe there was a back door—maybe a recurring character—that I could get in through. But after about two weeks I went into my agent's office—this actually happened—and I was talking to him about moving on and putting this whole thing behind us. I had made a good effort, now let's take whatever else comes down the pike. And sure enough as I walked out of

**“The character outline did not fit me. They were looking for an older character. They were looking at Robert Guillaume, I heard.”**

**—Tim Russ, Tuvok—**



Russ, out of makeup. The 39-year-old actor was a fan of the original series whose knowledge of STAR TREK lore has enriched the role of Tuvok.

his office, the receptionist came up and said they had called from VOYAGER to have me come in to read."

Noted executive producer Michael Piller, "In the case of Tuvok, we had created a character who was supposed to be an elderly man. Somebody who was an older Vulcan, who had the sort of breadth of experience and life adventures that could bring a different kind of voice to the ensemble. We had never cast an 'old man' in a regular part of the series, and we thought that would be a good idea. We definitely wanted that to be an African-American actor in that role and we found some, but none of them jumped out and said, 'Vulcan.' Then Rick said, 'I really want you to see this guy who finished second to LeVar when we started this thing, Tim Russ.' So Tim walked into the room, and he was a Vulcan. It was very simple—he looked like a Vulcan, he talked like a Vulcan, he *was* a Vulcan. We didn't have to go any further—we just knew."

Added Jeri Taylor, series co-creator with Berman and Piller, "It's been reported we were reading white men in their 60s for Tuvok. That is not true. We always intended him to be black, but an older person. We were not finding this character with the peo-

ple we had read at that age range, so we decided to lower our age limit. Tim Russ was one of the first people to come in and once he nailed it we abandoned the search for older people."

Russ is appropriately philosophical about his gamble paying off. "There is no guarantee, no rhyme or reason to half of this stuff. It's like a continuous horse race. The only way you know you are not going to win is if you get off the horse. You've got to stay on the horse. And the longer you stay on the horse, the better you get at learning how to ride the horse, and learning how to play the field. Sometimes you'll come in first, but the purse may not be that big. Sometimes you'll come in second or third. One of those times you'll run around and hit the big jackpot."

No doubt Russ' familiarity and affection for STAR TREK, in particular the original series, helped him succeed in his audition. He was well versed in the diction and mannerisms Leonard Nimoy imbued in Spock. Russ had already accomplished the hours of viewing and study it would take a typical actor to become well-versed in Vulcan body-language and speech patterns by simply growing up with the show. "I had been doing that, involuntarily, for a couple of decades," said Russ. "And I was reading the novels based on the original cast as well. There is a certain rhythm and quality to the speech written into the dialogue of the character—a certain formality—and yet it is not monotony. There's an analytical way he speaks, and a matter-of-fact way he speaks; and he's not harassed or razzed by any kind of emotional onslaught, whether it is good or bad, from anybody else. That's what I played when I read for him."

"I remembered everything I could remember about the way Nimoy played his character; and I just did the same thing. At that point in time I didn't have the luxury of doing a lot of different nuances or twists to this character. I could have rolled that dice; but seeing as how I had gambled all the way up to that point, I wasn't going to gamble anymore. I think that the other contributing factors were that I have the same build—it's a slender build, sort of a swimmer's build—and the height, and also the vocal quality. Those factors are genetic. I can't do much about that."

Russ recognized immediately that the role a Vulcan plays in STAR TREK is historically defined. Tuvok is destined to provide much the same intellectual knowledge, wisdom, and emotional impartiality that Spock gave James T. Kirk. How then could Tuvok be seen as separate and distinct from his famed predecessor? In the process of defining Tuvok and distinguishing him from Spock, Russ proved he can "talk Trek" with the best of them:

Noted Russ, "Because Spock was half human, he had to overcompensate. He was on a planet where everybody else was open, and he was not. In order for him to fit in—you can imagine the pressure to fit in that all chil-

dren go through—he would have to kill the human side, as it were. Whereas, my character is full Vulcan. I'm comfortable with who I am, so I can feel and do what I wish. The difference between myself and Spock is that this character has a family. He has a wife and four children. I think that has changed him somewhat, the same way that it would change human beings. He looks at the world differently. And I think that my character has maybe a small percentage more sensitivity—a fraction more perhaps—in understanding the human beings he works with. Particularly in his relationship with the Captain.

"I think Spock's character might have been a little older than I am. In fact, he may have been 10 or 20 years older than I am. And the experiences he has gone through have made him a different person. We see this in *UNDISCOVERED COUNTY*. I loved the mellowed Spock, who talks about logic only being the beginning, where all we had heard before was that it was everything. He is so laid back, and then he also seems very angry with his protégé in that film. He forces that information from her in a mind-meld. That is not a Vulcan thing to do. Typically, he should have been very reserved and calm, but he wasn't. So there are nuances and differences in these characters."

So thorough is Russ' knowledge of Vulcans, and so careful is he to never stray from the narrow boundaries of appropriate behavior, that barely an episode goes by without a call to the writer/producers, usually Jeri Taylor. "I have called her at home on the weekends. Twice that has happened. And you know, it's not entirely unusual because she works on stories on the weekends and she is quite open to all that stuff. Now it's a joke: whenever I call the office the secretaries say, 'Oh, no, here we go again.' Typically on every script there is going to be some kind of phone call, usually about the dialogue. It is very small things—this phrase is too casual, or that expression is not Vulcan. Minor things."

The major things to Tim Russ are story points, aspects of the plot that don't jibe to established Vulcan lore, or to his own concept of Tuvok. One such discussion occurred over the script of "Prime Factors," in which Tuvok assists a mutinous action in an attempt to send the ship back home (see episode guide). Another happened during the filming of "Cathexis," and revolved around Vulcan physiognomy. "One of my pet peeves, whether movies or stories, are things that are not consistent," he explained. "Particularly if you are dealing with science fic-



Russ as Tuvok with Garrett Wang as Kim in "Projections," one of the shows produced at the end of *VOYAGER*'s first season, but held over to open the beginning of the second year.

tion, you are setting up a series of premises and things that have never been seen before. If you are going to do that, you cannot introduce things later on in the story that contradict the premises you set up in the first place. That's a story hole. I know, sometimes you have to go with tiny ones here and there, but in most cases, these things can be corrected in five minutes.

"If it is a new show, like *BABYLON 5*, where you have never seen these people before, then it is a discovery process. You are laying down the tracks. But if the tracks are already laid down, then the train's got to stay on them. Otherwise, you've got serious problems. If you do not distinguish between characters, what is the point of having different characters? When a developed character walks into the room, you know for the most part, as an audience member, what he is going to say and do. Even if this character is unpredictable, that is an element of the character that has to be consistent. You can always discover elements of this character within nuances of the story and in situations, but it has to be consistent with what he would do as a character."

Although Russ has never spoken with Nimoy, they share in common a protective attitude as custodian of their character, and a willingness to pepper the producers with questions and concerns. "And that must have been twice as hard at that time," said Russ. "Then again, he was dealing with Gene Roddenberry, and I bet you that Gene was listening to him. It seems that he was that kind of individual. I bet he had to fight for it, but I bet he got a lot of what he wanted. I think he started out with a basic outline of his character that they gave him, and then he stuck to the outline and built upon it slowly, based on the story circumstances. Then he stood on the platform and said, 'This is the base you gave me. What you are telling me to do now is completely contrary to that base.' And that is the job of the actor; to take the clay, to work with it, and to make it into something. You just can't look at a page of dialogue and

just spew it without knowing what the hell it is you are doing."

Russ gives as an example a scene in "Learning Curve," in which Tuvok forms a kind of Starfleet Academy night school for the Maquis crew members. In the story, Tuvok claims to be a stickler for protocols, yet, as Russ explained, "Clearly, in 'Prime Factors' he directly violated protocols up and down the line. Then two episodes later, you have him talking about how stern he is about protocols? This is the kind of thing I'm talking about.

There's a line in an episode we just finished, 'I've always respected the Captain's decisions.' And that line was difficult to say when, in fact, we know he again violated protocols by taking matters into his own hands. The bottom line is: it is very difficult to believe a character and stay with him if you are going to consistently jump the ship in terms of what he's laid down."

The long hours continue for Russ, already back in pointed ears for *VOYAGER*'s second, full season of 26 episodes. The long hours of shooting are broken by practical jokes, humor, and a genuine sense of friendship among cast and crew. And with a cast of nine there are episodes in which Tuvok plays a minor role, giving Russ some valued days off, part of which he spends autographing photos for fans. "It's a long season and can be pretty tedious. We'll end one episode on Tuesday morning and start the next one on Tuesday afternoon. Literally, the next shot will be the next episode. So, you are finishing up one thing and you are jumping right into the next—out of sequence, mind you. So, it is a lot of time-consuming stuff. Your weekends are spent learning stuff for the next week."

Despite the long hours, it's clear Russ has settled in for what he hopes will be a long run of molding his clay, protecting his foundation, keeping the train on the tracks, and riding the horse. Years from now, he still anticipates eagerly awaiting the arrival of the next script. "[The writers] will go out of their way to challenge what we have established thus far. They will give me alien creatures, they will surgically alter me, they will do all kinds of things to challenge this character. It's not going to be so much about my character; it's going to be about the story. To me, the most fascinating thing is the story, the science fiction premise. We're all sitting in the trailers wondering, what's the next script? Trying to get the preliminary copy from Hair and Makeup—they always get it first, you know, before all of the revisions and stuff—just to see what the story is. And I'm sure I'll be on the phone to Jeri many times." □

wrong. I don't ever want to become complacent. I think that is an extremely dangerous attitude. STAR TREK is popular now, but if we don't maintain the high standards, if we don't look at every story and every decision with the same critical eye we have always used, if the quality begins to slip at all, if we get cocky and arrogant and say it's so popular we can do no wrong, I think we are doomed. I talk as though the wolf is at the door. The fans are restive and we've got to keep giving them the best we have to offer. No one sits on their laurels around here."

### THE UPN CONNECTION

At the same time, through many more lunch meetings ("I've eaten more fruit salad that I care to remember," said Taylor), the story for the pilot episode was hammered into shape. The trio would brainstorm ideas, Taylor would take notes, and Piller would type up digests of each day's progress. "It was just a process of adding and embellishing and then going back and changing," said Taylor. "It was a collaborative process that took quite a while. When that was approved, Michael and I then divided up the screenplay. He wrote the first half and I wrote the second, then we switched and he worked on the first and I worked on the sec-

ond. So it was all sort of a mish-mash."

Each phase of development, premise, pilot story, and script, was reviewed and approved by Paramount studios. During the early stages of development, the United Paramount Network did not exist and in fact, the trio of creators' contracts are for a syndicated show. It was only midway through development that STAR TREK: VOYAGER became the flagship program of a new network. The most obvious impact of this new management was a bit of indecision over the act-break structure of early episodes.

"Even when there was a UPN on paper there were no executives so all the decision-

making and development process was done by Paramount Television," said Taylor. "We started out with five acts because that's how we've always done it. Initially when they did get some executives over at the network they said, 'Wait a minute. We're a network, we're not syndicated, we want a four-act structure.' So we went back and re-edited all of those [episodes] shot, changed our scripts around and figured out how to put them in four acts, and started developing shows in four acts. After the shows went on the air, [the executives] began to realize that the four act structure left them with a great big clump of commercials at the end of the show with no program except the credits to keep people watching. People are not going to hang around through six minutes of commercials to see the credits and they were changing channels so [the executives] said we had better go back to five acts. So we have gone back, re-edited all those episodes that were in four, changed our scripts back, and are now developing stories in five acts."

### BRAGA ON BOARD

Although the writing staff of TNG assumed they would be moving as a group to

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Robert Duncan McNeill, who plays Paris, in an early role in 1987's MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE (inset), resisting Meg Foster as Evil-Lyn (above).

## LT. TOM PARIS

From the VOYAGER bible:

*Paris' career in Starfleet was to be exemplary. He descended from a proud lineage of Starfleet legends; his great-grandfather, grandmother, father, and aunt were all Admirals. Everyone assumed Tom, who was bright, capable, and charming, would achieve those same heights. No one knew that Tom felt a tremendous pressure to live up to the name his family had carved—and had grave doubts whether that was possible.*

*After graduation, he joined a unit of Starfleet's SAV division (Small Attack Vessel) where his piloting skills would be put to good use. But there was an accident during a war games demonstration—a pilot was killed—and Tom Paris, fearing his reputation might suffer and derail his career, lied and placed the blame on the dead man... That mistake cost him dearly. When the lie was revealed, he was discharged. His worst fears realized—he had sul-*

*lied the family name.*

If the above sounds a bit familiar, it should. The concept of the Tom Paris character was rooted in the TNG episode "First Duty," in which young Wesley Crusher must decide whether to lie about an accidental death, or turn on his classmates, including Ensign Lecarno, played by Robert Duncan McNeill. "We had liked the idea of a character like Tom Paris ever since we had done 'First Duty' and had Lecarno," said Taylor. "We knew we wanted somebody like that. We didn't make Lecarno the con officer, because he was somewhat darker and more damaged. We felt Lecarno couldn't be redeemed and we wanted Paris to be on a journey of redemption."

Legend has it that the trio of executive producers kept measuring every actor they auditioned against McNeill's

Lecarno, when, in a brilliant flash of lightning, Rick Berman realized they should just cast McNeill himself in the role. Completely false, said Taylor, "We knew from the get-go we were going to

Robert Duncan McNeill as Lt. Tom Paris, a top pilot whose backstory was inspired by McNeill's role in TNG's "First Duty."



read this guy. The only problem was, he was in New York doing a play six days a week. So we had to wait until the casting director in New York was established and McNeill was one of the first people who was put on tape in New York. In the meantime, we were reading lots of other people, but as soon as we got the tape he was by far the best we had seen and we made arrangements to bring him out here. So we read him in L.A. rather late in the process, but he came in and nailed the part. We took no one else to the studio."

Robert Duncan McNeill's feature film credits include the leading role in MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE. His television credits include his Emmy-nominated performance as Charlie in ABC's ALL MY CHILDREN, as well as recurring roles in ABC's HOMEFRONT and CBS's SECOND CHANCES. Dale Kutzera

**"In this case the medicine wheel won't be much help. There's not enough of his mind left to work with."**

—The Doctor

## CATHEXIS

★★

5/01/95. Production number: 113. Stardate: 48734.2. Teleplay by Brannon Braga. Story by Brannon Braga & Joe Menosky. Directed by Kim Friedman.

Tuvok and Chakotay are attacked while returning from a routine expedition. Tuvok sustains minor injuries while Chakotay is critically wounded, his mind completely erased. During an encounter with a black nebula, all of Chakotay's neural energy was depleted. Unless it is returned, Chakotay may be doomed to a life as a brain-dead host. The crew discover an alien presence on board as crew members are mysteriously possessed and compelled to disable the ship. The ever-curious Janeway, however, insists on returning to the scene of the crime, a black nebula. As the ship nears the nebula, Janeway discovers the alien has taken over Tuvok and all seems lost as he takes command of the ship until the spirit of Chakotay—which had been trying to help all along—saves the lives of the *Voyager* crew.

It had to happen eventually: an average bottle show. There's nothing wrong with "Cathexis," but there is little compelling either. We've seen every element here before, from the near-dead crewman to the crew-possession gimmick, used in both "Turnabout Intruder" in the original series and a handful of times on TNG. Same thing with the ever-present nebulas, and lightbulb glowworm aliens. There are some interesting character moments, particularly between Kes and Doc as they discuss Chakotay's medicine wheel, but these moments are not enough to sustain the commonplace plot as they did in "The Cloud." "Cathexis" points out the one danger of having a cast that has fit so naturally into the STAR TREK universe: that episodes begin looking like tired eighth-season shows, rather than new, compelling first season shows.

"I struggled with that script," said Brannon Braga, who wrote the teleplay with Italy-based Joe Menosky. "Michael Piller wanted to make it a story about paranoia, which sounded good at the time, but it's hard to do a show about paranoia on a Starfleet vessel. People don't behave that way. It was a complex story—as many of mine are—but I never quite had a handle on the logic of what was going on. The actors felt the lack of impact in the script and were trying to bring something to it, God bless them, but some of it was over the top. The director should have pulled them in. It was a rather popular episode, but in the end I think it was much ado about nothing."



**Tuvok (Tim Russ), possessed by an alien presence, fires his phaser at the bridge crew in an attempt to disable the ship in "Cathexis."**

**"I guess I'll just have to accept the fact that I'll spend the rest of my life fighting with her."**

—Torres

## FACES

★★★★

5/08/95. Production Number: 114. Teleplay by Kenneth Biller. Story by Jonathan Glassner and Adam Grossman. Directed by Winrich Kolbe.

B'Elanna Torres and Lt. Tom Paris are abducted



**Vidlian scientist Sulan (Brian Markinson) splits Torres into her Klingon and human halves in "Faces," searching for a cure to the Phage.**

by the Vidiian who suffer from the Phage. In order to test her immunity to the disease, Sulan (Brian Markinson), a Vidiian scientist, splits B'Elanna into two separate beings, one fully Klingon, the other fully human. Her two selves must learn to work together in order to escape the alien laboratory and rescue Paris.

The concept, pitched by Jonathan Glassner, was resurrected by Ken Biller after joining the VOYAGER staff (see story on page 77). The challenge was to devise a plausible scientific rationale that justified the dramatic contrivance of splitting Torres into fully human and Klingon versions of herself. As it happened, Brannon Braga was working on "Phage" at the time. "One of the problems with the story was there didn't seem to be a believable way of splitting B'Elanna in half without it seeming really hokey," said Biller. "I thought there may be a way for the Vidiians to do this that sounded technologically viable. These Vidiians might be searching for a species that was immune and they had never seen anything like Klingons before. She could be the savior of their people."

"Then it became a beauty and the beast story. It occurred to me that if you came from this culture your ideal beauty may be someone who was physically imposing and powerful, like a Klingon. It appealed to me that this scientist, Sulan, would develop an infatuation with B'Elanna and she might use that Klingon sexuality to get him to do what she wanted. This was an episode that functioned on a bunch of different levels."

Biller also delved into B'Elanna's backstory, creating a character with an unusual amount of emotional baggage. "This is a woman with a human father and Klingon mother and what if she was embarrassed by her Klingon ridges and always tried to cover them up? As a child she may not have wanted to look that way. Maybe she thought her father would like her if she didn't look so Klingon. So what a wonderful, strange irony if you suddenly touch your forehead and these ridges are gone and you looked the way you wanted to look, but you were a prisoner in this camp and were dying."

"Faces" offers an outstanding performance by Roxann Biggs-Dawson, who creates two completely separate characters. As a heavy-breathing, monosyllabic Klingon, she is every inch the warrior. As the human Torres, Dawson creates a range of nuanced emotions: fear, hurt, anger, loss. It's almost a disappointment to realize she will undoubtedly be back in the forehead next week.

"I wanted to leave her human at the end, where she is touching her forehead and realizing that she is going back to looking the way she looked and being this very conflicted person," said Biller. "I was very vocal that we do not have to see her restored. We know Zimmerman is going to fix her up and she'll be back in the next episode. The trick was to not destroy the character. We couldn't get to the end of the episode and say that Torres has now resolved all her issues and is at peace with herself. That's fundamental to the character."

Noted director Winrich Kolbe, "I was generally pleased with the show. There were a few moments that I thought were missed. I wasn't 100% happy with the tag and I wanted to do more in the cave scene with the two B'Elannas, but it became an issue of production costs and how much split-screen stuff we could do. I would have liked it to seem bigger. At times it looked like there were four prisoners and two guards instead of a whole complex of peo-

ple. It was originally set on a jungle planet, but it was already an extremely expensive episode, so I had to cut back and, of course, we had to go back to those caves we always use."

**"How many did you kill during the war?"**

—Ma'Bor Jetrel

## JETREL

★★1/2

5/15/95. Production number: 115. Stardate: 48832.1. Teleplay by Jack Klein & Karen Klein and Kenneth Biller. Story by Scott Nimerfro & Jim Thomson. Directed by Kim Friedman.

Neelix is confronted by the Haakonian scientist, Ma'Bor Jetrel (James Sloyan), responsible for creating the Metrion Cascade, the device used to annihilate a major portion of the Talaxian race, including Neelix's own family. Jetrel claims that Neelix will soon fall ill from long-term affects of the Cascade and that he has the only cure.

Written by the freelance team of Jack and Karen Klein, "Jetrel" was given a page one rewrite by Ken Biller. "I did a lot of research about Oppenheimer and became fascinated by what I learned," he said. "There were some lines Jetrel said that were actual things Oppenheimer said. For instance, Oppenheimer was once asked if he felt guilty about Hiroshima and he said, 'Yes I feel guilty, but I don't regret it.' I think a lot of his motivation was pure scientific curiosity—to see if it could be done. That over-rod a lot of ethical concerns."

To sustain what is essentially a two-man play, Biller orchestrated as many levels of conflict between Jetrel and Neelix as he could. "It's a polemic argument. The trick was to give Neelix an opportunity to nail this guy for what he had done, and to have the Jetrel character use all of his moralizing and rationalizing to explain what he did. That episode was what television should be: you write something, put everything you can into it, then a bunch of good actors and a director take it and make it better than you could imagine."

The resolution, in which Neelix forgives the dying Jetrel, was the subject of much discussion. "We went back and forth on that a lot," said Biller. "I think if there is a flaw in the episode it's that we made it too neat: 'I'm not really mad at Jetrel, I'm mad at myself, therefore I can forgive him.' It's more complex than that. The way I tried to get there was in the fifth act—in the longest scene ever written in a transporter room—where Neelix learns that Jetrel has lost his family, that people looked at him as a monster, and that he has gone to these lengths to undo what he had done. My notion was that the forgiveness was a gift Neelix was giving him. Even if it wasn't entirely true, he was giving this man that one second of peace before he died."



**Ma'Bor Jetrel (James Sloyan), the Haakonian scientist responsible for the annihilation of Neelix' race, pays penance in "Jetrel."**

**"You are all dead. Your first command together was less than successful."**

—Tuvok

## LEARNING CURVE

★★1/2

5/22/95. Production Number: 116. Stardate: 48846.5. Written by Ronald Wilkerson & Jean Louise Matthias. Directed by David Livingston.

When a handful of Maquis crew members slack

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# STAR TREK THE FRANCHISE

## 30 YEARS IN SPACE

*Gene Roddenberry's enduring vision of the future keeps trekkin'.*

By Thomas Doherty

In that patriarchal way that was only his, Captain James Tiberius Kirk used to lecture about the need of humans to go forth and "spread our seed" to distant galaxies, to cast our earthly genes upon alien landscapes and, if need be, alien beings. Kirk (who himself took every opportunity to fertilize compatible species) might look with paternal pride upon his many descendants proliferating around the cable dial. The Captain of the *Enterprise*—or rather the visionary behind the whole enterprise, the late Gene Roddenberry—has spawned the greatest franchise in science-fiction history, a kinship network sprung from the sturdy loins of the father (STAR TREK), born fruit in the proud lineage of the son (STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION), and now gone forth and multiplied in the *next next* generations. At present count, two offspring appear in original rotation, STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE and STAR TREK: VOYAGER, each wearing the name of the father up front, each suffering under the burden of the family business, and each with a lot to live up to—and down.

STAR TREK you know about: the cult item that mushroomed into a major world religion. Via 79 original broadcasts and endless reruns, TREK I imbedded itself into the national consciousness. Besides naming vessels for NASA and contributing vernacular to the *Dictionary of American Slang* ("warp speed," "beam me up"), it bequeathed a set of characters as familiar as the faces on our paper money. Beginning in 1979 with the remedially titled

STAR TREK: THE MOTION PICTURE, a series of theatrical features kept the faith alive and the congregation happy. In the executive offices at Paramount, the future, at least for the present, looked, well, utopian.

Yet as the cast of TREK I succumbed to the irreversible aging process for which no screenwriter can find an antidote, the need for a new priesthood became palpable. Extending the TREK frontier carried some risks: if the true believers refused to accept a substitute, the resentment might boomerang back on the popularity of the flagship product. With the 1987 release in syndication of THE NEXT GENERATION, however, STAR TREK was transformed from a solo cash machine into an expanding franchise, a brand-name product that with proper nurturing and quality control measures could be a permanent meal ticket of Paramount significance.

From this vantage, TREK II was a real



Son of STAR TREK was fruitful and multiplied.

surprise. At first sniffed at by boomers weaned on the classics, the show ultimately managed to seduce the old audience while forging a new one. With minimal variation (the narratively convenient Holodeck, the Klingons as Federation aliens, and the addition of an oh-so-'80's therapist for the *Enterprise* crew), it replayed the familiar tropes with ritual devotion, merely modernizing the graphics (goodbye paper mache planets and cardboard consoles) and updating the politics (hello ecology, multi-culturalism and pacifism). It took about three years for the show to hum on all cylinders but by about the time of, say, the memorable two-part "Best of Both Worlds" Borg episodes that bridged the 1990 season, TREK II had not only generated more total shows than its model, but walked out from under its shadow. More than any other single ingredient, Patrick Stewart as Jean-Luc Picard was the franchise of the franchise. He presided over

the ensemble with an easy, confident authority that made William Shatner's hysterical gesticulation and staccato line delivery look like amateur night at the Tulsa Dinner Theatre. Fervently adopted by his American cousins, the beloved Brit even managed to avoid the typecasting that none of the original crew ever really escaped.

Buoyed by the success of TREK I movies and TREK II on TV, the home office further expanded operations with DEEP SPACE NINE in January 1993 and VOYAGER in January 1995. DS9 is more spin-off than sequel, VOYAGER the true successor and bearer of the torch. Not only is Paramount using the show to anchor its

The originals, fathering the greatest franchise in science-fiction history.







The next generations, each bearing the name of the father up front, each suffering under the burden of family business, with a lot to live up to—and down.

new network (and it needs VOYAGER badly: UPN's other offsprings barely outdraw C-SPAN), but the TREK production line demands a vibrant and fully operating prototype to keep the customers satisfied. Otherwise, the whole operation is just a museum piece for video antiquarians.

At the same time, too many fast knock-offs can glut the market and diminish the value of the product line. Quality control is already a problem on the big screen. Although TREK II worked in guest visitations by Spock, McCoy and Scotty, it was the plodding feature film GENERATIONS (1995) that handed off the baton from the father to the son. To put it kindly, GENERATIONS was a disappointing intergenerational transition. The fact is, whatever the boxoffice returns, the last feature TREK film to receive unqualified commercial success and critical esteem was STAR TREK IV: THE VOYAGE HOME (1986), the one about the humpback whales. As TREK II spirals off into the syndication afterworld, it will see big-screen theatrical life every two to three years. But the next feature outing had better generate some heat, or the new STAR WARS trilogy will erase them.

The small screen TREKs face their own set of difficulties. Because the two newest entries in the franchise must: 1) operate under the established conventions of their predecessors, 2) create new conventions independent of the past, and 3) coordinate interconnections between 1 and 2, sheer clutter is bedeviling both DS9 and VOYAGER. The neat bipolar dialectic of vintage TREK—Federation good, Klingons and Romulans bad—has proliferated into a bewildering array of star systems and deep space backstories, a veritable balkanization of the TREK universe—badlands, wormholes, Alpha Quadrants, Delta Quadrants, Gamma Quadrants, Maquis, Bajorans, Cardassians, Ferengis and the Dominion. Even

**“VOYAGER is the true successor and bearer of the torch. The franchise can survive the closing of the DS9 wormhole.”**

Trekkers, a group not exactly inattentive to minutia, get mixed up with the storylines, while unwary viewers who came in late will find the byzantine geo-politics and menagerie of species downright dizzying. (In this season's DS9 premiere, the Klingons break their treaty with the Federation and go to war to prevent the changeling Founders of the Dominion from overtaking the Cardassians and thereby threatening the Federation—got it?)

No wonder both shows sometimes seem less interested in pumping new blood into the TREK mythos than in incestuously commingling the various lineages. Cross pollination of cast members from all four incarnations remains the favorite technique for solidifying brand-name loyalty. Hang around long enough and a familiar face is bound to materialize on the transporter deck. Thus, Will Riker's evil twin Thomas arrives to stir things up on DS9 (and make Major Kira's pulse quicken) by hijacking a starship or (more confusingly) actor Aron Eisenberg, who plays Nog in DS9, appears in a VOYAGER episode called "Initiations" as a totally different character, a violent plebe looking to earn his wings.

Of the two new entries, DEEP SPACE NINE has been adjudged the show more in need of life support. Though funkier and darker than VOYAGER, and with better ratings, it is beset by a distinct lack of buzz

from the fans. This is too bad because DS9 has some gifted players, notably Colm Meaney as O'Brien (retaining Celtic control over engineering), Rene Auberjonois as the no-nonsense changeling Odo, head of DS9 security, and Quark, of the rug merchant race of Ferengis, the only ethnic group for whom prejudice is permitted. ("Weren't you warned about the Ferengis at the Academy?")

Adopting the predictable resuscitation measure, DS9's producers injected a proven player from a predecessor series into the series. The permanent assignment of Worf, the stern Klingon from TREK II was trumpeted by a cover story in *TV Guide* and accompanied by a two-hour premiere that pulled out all the stops: a spectacular battle with a Klingon armada and hand-to-hand combat with Klingon commandos. Formidable as Worf's shoulders are, however, his presence does little to change the basic calibrations of DS9. The problem is less a matter of personnel than situation. Stuck in a stationary bubble, the show tends to be claustrophobic and static. Without the forward momentum of adventurous exploration, the cast serves as glorified security guards for a wormhole. Rather than zooming around the galaxy mixing it up, the mission is to retain order—and protecting the fortress makes for less compelling drama than venturing outside its walls.

VOYAGER is the anti-STAR TREK. Though it shamelessly recycles plots from the mid-'60s series, the show is emphatically mid-'90s in sense and sensibility. Where STAR TREK went boldly outward, the crew of VOYAGER, like Dorothy in Oz, wants only to get back home to terra firma. The conceit has a Federation starship zapped gazillions of light years into a remote part of the galaxy ("the Delta Quadrant"), away from Federation oversight and prime directives, cast adrift and on their

own. Just as STAR TREK expressed the expansionist impulses of JFK's New Frontier, VOYAGER reflects the cocooning of *fin de siècle* America—never looking for trouble, only minding its own business, trying (God, how they try) to stay out of the way of foreign entanglements and get back to Planet Earth.

Captain Janeway, the first double-X chromosome to sit in the captain's chair, is the most controversial and interesting variation on the TREK theme. Of course, the audacious choice of a woman to wear the pants on deck wasn't all that audacious.

With tighter and tighter jaws, female fans watched the botched attempts of the boys' club to depict credibly a take-charge commander of the distaff persuasion. Presumably, the utopian world of the Federation would have long since put women on an equal military footing with the men. As the franchise replicated, some pioneer feminist had to blast through the Roddenberrian glass ceiling to say things like "I've got the lives of 532 crewmen in my hands, mister" rather than hike up her mini-skirt and coo "hailing frequencies open, Captain."

Like all women in authority, Janeway faces the usual double standard: if too soft, she's not credible as a commander; if too severe, she's an unsympathetic, hard-hearted b-word. Quite literally, she can't afford to let her hair down (in contrast to the '60's model Shatner, who regularly took off his shirt to expose his then-manly physique). Wearing the captain's epaulets (or badge) a bit stiffly, Kate Mulgrew seems ill at ease as Janeway. She tends to pose with arms akimbo, sort of like Superman before take-off. Her voice—trembly and reedy—is her biggest deficit. More than one fan has detected a discomforting echo of Primat Conehead.

Though a studied effort in diversity staffing, the *Voyager* crew is as bland as vanilla. As First Officer Chakotay, the tattooed Native American who seems beamed in from DANCES WITH WOLVES, Robert Beltran spends a lot of time getting in touch with his "spirit guide" and mouthing New Age platitudes. More even than Captain Janeway, he's emblematic of the show's mandate to reverse the gender dynamics of TREK and TREK II, where the females were nurturers and the men were fighters. In truth, VOYAGER seems embarrassed by its parentage and always tries to live down the imperialist, violent white male triad that ruled the original *Enterprise*. Hence Chakotay is preternaturally slow to anger. In "Initiations," he behaved like a patient high school counselor towards a young warrior who insulted and repeatedly tried to kill him. One longed for him to display Kirk's



Worf Factor 9: Michael Dorn in season premiere "The Way of the Warrior." The personnel change does little to better DS9's basic structural problem.

**“The balkanization of vintage Trek begat a bewildering array of star systems and deep space backstories on the unwary viewer.”**

regressive machismo and deck the brat.

Elsewhere, as the Vulcan Tuvok, Tim Russ can't seem to muster more than a stiff Nimoy imitation. Thomas Paris (Robert Duncan McNeill) is the Hans Solo figure, an alleged renegade who has cast off his rebellious nature for total submission to Janeway. Harry Kim (Garrett Wang) is the tenderfoot ensign and would-be squeaky clean heartthrob for pre-pubescent Trekkers. Thus far, none of this crew has emerged as a spontaneous favorite in the way that Spock and Data broke from the pack in their first seasons—except perhaps the prickly, effete Holodeck doctor played by Robert Picardo. Ironically it is the holograph who seems most fully formed and lifelike. In narrative terms, he invites the usual metaphysical pondering about the definition of life, reminiscent of the notorious "Is Data a toaster?" episode from TREK II. Always, though, in orthodox Trek Theology, if it looks human, it is human.

Like TREK II in its treacly "Wesley" phase, VOYAGER is not immune to severe outbreaks of the cutes. In the case of the pudgy Neelix (Ethan Phillips), ladling out his favorite cooking recipes, and his girlfriend, the elfin babe Kes (Jennifer Lien), the affliction is nearly terminal. Recently, the far more attractive Paris has set his sights on Kes, a welcome development if it injects some tension and discord into what is a far too harmonious world. In fairness, first season is a shakedown cruise during which screenwriters put flesh on the characters, gauge the Q-scores of the actors, and experiment with intra-crew dynamics.

Not that VOYAGER hasn't taken a few risks. "Faces" marked an unexpected entry into horror territory. Going against the standard Trekian ethos which embraces hideous physiogamy and avoids politically incorrect terrestrial-centric notions of human beauty, "Faces" featured the Videans, truly gruesome "organ harvester" creatures. When an alien surgeon grafted the face of a murdered voyager onto his own, he provided one of the show's rare gross-out jolts and proved that sometimes beauty really is skin deep. The episode was also a nice showcase for

Roxann Biggs-Dawson, separated in a dual role between her Klingon and human selves, utterly believable in both.

One index of the trouble both shows have in creating character conflict is how often they must resort to plot machinations such as parallel universes, evil twins, and a seemingly endless array of "temporal inversion faults in the space time matrix." The reliance on outre arenas—the need to totally shift the environment and redefine the personalities of the characters—implies there's something static and unexciting in their present construction. In "Through the Looking Glass," a DS9 from last season, the parallel universe version of the cast was a lot more entertaining than the real-life version—sexier, nastier, spicier. Tellingly too, both DS9 and VOYAGER remain stiffly chaste and discreet in terms of romance, flesh and physical attractiveness. At the risk of seeming sexist or specieist, both shows have the annoying tendency to cover the faces of their most attractive females with Elephant Man makeup.

But whatever their faults, DS9 and VOYAGER fill a necessary void. From WATERWORLD to STRANGE DAYS, theatrical SF is so determinably downbeat in tone that the field for another vision of the future—like, maybe there *is* one—is pretty much left to STAR TREK. At their worst, the episodes are as chirpy and perky as a Kathy Lee Gifford commercial (smugness has always been STAR TREK's bane).

The usual trajectory of sequels and spin-offs is a long, sad slide into entropy and embarrassment as corporate greedheads suck every last nickel from the marrow of the name brand. To a remarkable degree, however, the STAR TREK franchise has avoided undue seepage. Like Japanese businessmen, the keepers of the TREK flame have looked at the Big Picture and played a long term strategy. Both shows look first-class and the video effects are terrific. As long as they realize the gold mine that Roddenberry left behind can't be strip-mined, the franchise should be safe for all the future next generations. □

VOYAGER, Michael Piller felt the new show and DS9 would both benefit from some shuffling of the deck. Ron Moore and Rene Echevarria moved to DS9 while Brannon Braga, who had turned down an opportunity to work on DS9 a year earlier, began work on VOYAGER. "Michael Piller offered me a job on DEEP SPACE NINE at the end of the sixth season," said Braga. "They apparently needed support over there. It was an offer to do something new, and there were many appealing aspects, but my heart was still with NEXT GENERATION, and I turned it down. I really wanted to see NEXT GEN through to the end, and I'm really glad that I did. The seventh season was very productive for me. I had a lot of fun, and I also had the opportunity to write the final episode, which turned out to be a very good experience. Another reason I didn't go is I'm definitely a ship-show writer. DEEP SPACE NINE is a terrific show with many fascinating differences, but those differences aren't my strong suit. I'm very ambivalent about politics. The kinds of stories one tells on a starship show

are much more up my alley. If you look at the collection of shows I've done, they're not the kinds of shows you'd be inclined to do on DEEP SPACE NINE. I don't know if I really could do a very good job writing for DEEP SPACE NINE. I probably could, I just don't know. It's just not quite in tune with my sensibilities.

That's not to say it's not a great show—I also couldn't write for ER."

Being on hand for VOYAGER's creation also allowed Braga to watch the show evolve and comment on drafts of the pilot story. "They were very gracious in taking my input and notes on the pilot," said Braga. "We were having conceptual meetings about the stories and where to take the characters months before the actual production began. Though I was not involved in the initial conceptualization of it, [the premise] seemed exactly right. In fact, I remember when DEEP SPACE NINE was first being created, I thought it would also have been neat if they had done this as another starship show, a ship that was cut off from the Federation. That was indeed what they ended up doing with VOYAGER. I loved the premise."

With only Piller, Taylor, and Braga on board as writing staff, and Piller devoting more time to his new western adventure show LEGEND, VOYAGER relied heavily on the talents of STAR TREK's eager pool of freelance writers. The bible and pilot



Producer Brannon Braga, who switched from writing TNG.

# STAR TREK VOYAGER

## ENSIGN HARRY KIM

*Garrett Wang on his "everyman" role as the ship's untried officer.*

By Dale Kutzera

From the VOYAGER bible:

*Kim, the Ops/Communications officer, is a human of Asian descent, and had the happiest day of his life when he reported to duty aboard Voyager. He knew his parents were proud—though he was a bit embarrassed by their hugs and kisses as they said good-bye—and that meant a lot to him. He grew up with love, warmth, and support, and an assumption that he would excel at whatever he chose. But if Harry was raised with love and care, he was also raised in a somewhat sheltered way. He had no worries, no cares, and whatever minor annoyances life might have brought were deflected from him by his parents. So Harry has some growing up to do. Having never experienced adversity, he has fewer of the tools for coping than some of the others. Though he tries to keep such thoughts from surfacing, he's scared. He's over his head in this mission. He goes about his duties with diligence—it's comforting somehow to have a job to do—but more than anyone else, Harry is suffering.*

Harry Kim is the everyman on VOYAGER. Picture the blue-collar diligence of a Chief O'Brien and the wide-eyed naiveté of a Wesley Crusher and you have Harry. "We felt that a fresh, straight-out-of-the-Academy young man would be a nice character," said Jeri Taylor. "He represented the everyman, the young man who's having the adventure for the first time. It was relatively late in the process that we decided it would be nice if he were Asian. Once again, because that's something that hadn't been seen in TREK since the original series."

While not quite as wide-eyed as his character Harry Kim, Garrett Wang is still a bit astounded at being part of what promi-



Garrett Wang as Kim, a cross between blue-collar Chief O'Brien with the naiveté of a Wesley Crusher.

ses to be a long voyage. Although studying acting for over 6 years, first at UCLA ("I took all my electives in theater") and then with different acting coaches, Wang (pronounced Wong) had only a few commercials and a guest spot on a sit-com before landing the role of Harry Kim. "My first real piece of television work was ALL AMERICAN GIRL," he said. "I was cast as Margaret Cho's boyfriend. I was rehearsing for that particular episode when I discovered that I had booked STAR TREK. That was

the first week of August.”

Wang’s casting gauntlet began a month earlier with an appointment to read for casting director Nan Dutton. Earlier that day he had a final call-back for a lead role in the film *CRUZ* by Rich Wilkes and, in typical Hollywood fashion, his agent paged him while he was waiting to read for Dutton. He got the part! “This was a big thing: my first film, a lead role. So I started reading and obviously wasn’t as prepared as I could be so we rescheduled for a second day.”

In the second audition, he again read Kim’s scene with Quark in the DS9 bar, and the scene with Torres in the air shaft at the pilot’s climax. This time he impressed Dutton enough to earn a meeting with the trio of executive producers. “So the third time I went in I met those guys,” Wang said. “The fourth time they were giving me last-minute coaching before I went in to the network to meet the big wigs of Paramount. So my fifth time was with the bigwigs and it was now down to myself and one other individual from New York.”

The experience of “going to studio” and auditioning before a room of nine or ten jaded executives is one Wang will not soon forget. “There is really ugly, fluorescent light overhead, which lights everybody up. You can see everything they are doing, and they can see everything you are doing. They are all sitting at the table and there is literally no emotion on their faces, because they are intently watching you. It gets a little unnerving, because oftentimes they will whisper back and forth while you are going through a scene. You just have to focus as much as you can.”

At the end of this round, Wang was left standing as his competition returned to New York empty-handed. Kim allowed himself a brief moment of celebration until they told him he didn’t have the part either. “They said, ‘We’re going to be looking around again. They still like you, but they want to see some more people.’ This wasn’t Berman, or Piller, or Taylor, but it was the Paramount Network bigwigs saying it. I don’t know what they had in their minds for Harry Kim at that point, but obviously they weren’t 100% sold on me. They took about a week-and-a-half and assembled a whole new crop of people. They went older and saw people that were more in their early ’30s.

“A week and a half later, they called and I came in again. It was me and one other actor, who was actually a friend of mine. We did it, and I was told that I would learn by noon the next day. And I did get a page from my agent while I was working on *ALL AMERICAN GIRL*. I called him back and he put me on hold for five minutes!”



Garrett Wang (pronounced Wong), showing Chakotay, Torres and Tuvok how to widen the sub-space fractures of “Time and Again” to get through to Janeway.

**“Kim can be one of the more complex characters because he begins as a blank page. I get to fill in the blanks, which is fun.”**

**—Garrett Wang, Kim—**

Wang had the part. “Garrett was our favorite early on,” said executive producer Jeri Taylor. “By his own admission he was a less experienced actor than most of the other people we ultimately hired. We were a little concerned by that, but felt he had such natural talent and appeal that he would get his acting strokes as he went along. When we saw his work in the pilot it was as though he just burst into this other level and is now one of the most popular characters.”

As the producers continued to cast the rest of the *VOYAGER* crew, Wang spent the month of August in hair, makeup, and costume tests, studying videos of TNG, and creating the character of Harry Kim. “Harry is younger than I am in age and also in maturity level,” said Wang. “So I didn’t really build up on myself. I had to take away. Garrett Wang has parts of Harry Kim, but Garrett Wang is more of a nut than Harry Kim. I took a base of myself, but then made it much simpler, much more eager and enthusiastic. He is not a blank character by any means. He’s got what he needs, he has the knowledge he learned in Starfleet. He graduated with excellent marks. He has the technical knowledge, but he doesn’t have any on-the-job experience. Kim can end up being one of the more complex characters, because he begins as a blank page. So I fill in the blanks, which is a fun job. I get to twist and turn with this character and push him in whatever ways I want, that I feel appropriate to the character, to the job, and to the show. It adds some creative juice for me to work on.”

In an episode in which Kim is featured

prominently, such as “Emanations” Wang carefully studies the script, reading it through two or three times, then breaking it down into individual scenes. “I try to get a feel for the overall spirit of the show—what exactly is it that they are trying to say? It’s like a painting. You start with a pencil outline, and that’s looking at the script in the broadest sense. What is this story? What is this character going through, what journey? What does he want, what is he trying to do? And then you lay on the colors, and the shading, and you get more

and more detailed. You break it down into scenes, then into beats, then into moments...seconds.”

With nine regular cast members sharing stories, however, a more typical day of work for Wang involves long hours of often dry, technical language on the bridge—what the cast calls “Bridge Fever.” “Those are the days you are just on the bridge forever, because there are so many camera angles they have to cover with everybody on the bridge. They tend to be days where there is no real through-line to what I am saying. It is purely expositional: ‘Captain, the da-da-da is approaching at Mark 612.’ That kind of thing. It is pretty much technobabble talk, except for Paris. They play Paris as the hot, macho guy. Here’s an example: Paris gets to say ‘We’re moving faster,’ and then my line was affirming what he said, ‘He’s right, our velocity has approached approximately 1,000 kilometers per second.’ I get that stuff. So, Paris doesn’t have much Bridge Fever. I get it pretty bad. Most of the time, we’re looking up at the viewscreen, which is really a blank. So on those days I sit there and focus on a bunch of cables, and try to picture in my mind the creature we’re looking at or the alien speaking to us. I try to lose myself in that as much as I can while we’re shooting. That’s the best you can do on the days when you’re not involved.”

Wang and Kim are alike in one way; both are just a bit in awe of the new adventure they have embarked on. “Sometimes I grasp it. Other times, I can’t believe it. I think I’m gonna wake up and realize that this was all a dream, because a lot of times it is like a fairy tale for me. The other actors have been on series or on soaps already. Look at Ethan and Picardo, they’ve been in the business for upwards of 20 years. Even Jennifer [Lien], she’s 20 but she’s been acting professionally for, I think, about six years. So I am the definite rookie of the cast, and it’s all happened so fast for me. Even from day one when I started auditioning, I always knew that I would go some place, that I would make something substantial of myself. I just didn’t expect it to happen so fast.” □

story synopses were sent to established freelancers in the spring of 1994, along with a letter from Jeri Taylor. "Last May I got this package in the mail, totally unexpected," said Mark O'Connell who wrote last season's DS9 episode "Meridian," but has yet to sell a story to VOYAGER. "It was a pitch package with the letter from Jeri saying it's going to be a big challenge. 'We need to think of ideas that will establish these characters and establish our scenario but we're trying to break the mold, we're trying to make everything new and different. Good luck.' They warn you up front this was going to be really difficult."

One writer who succeeded was Ken Biller, former story editor on BEVERLY HILLS 90210 and co-writer (with Chris Brancato) of the respected X-FILES episode "Eve." "Ken Biller was a friend of Rene [Echevarria]'s," said Braga. "He came in to pitch. We gave him an assignment and he did a very good job. It's difficult to find people who can write this show effectively, just because it's so idiosyncratic, but Ken fit in and was a nice guy. He and I are contemporaries so we have become very good friends."

#### THE X-FILES OF STAR TREK

Braga, who took many pitches for VOYAGER in the summer of 1994, was quick to warn prospective writers that the producers were being very careful in the selection of stories for the first season. Unlike the first season of DS9 which featured each character in an early episode (and as a result weakened Sisko's role as the central protagonist), VOYAGER's first season would be dedicated to strong adventure stories. "Michael felt that an error was made in DS9, because the first episodes were too soft and not exciting enough and that they just sort of left people flat," said Taylor. "He felt what people really wanted to see were those characters and he did not want to repeat that mistake. He wanted to go with high-concept stories. It was Michael's feeling, and correctly, I thought, that this should be an action-adventure kind of show, but it's also true that Brannon, Michael, and I

Menacing aliens in "Ex Post Facto," makeup design by Michael Westmore, who won an Emmy for his work last year on sister show DS9.



# STAR TREK VOYAGER

## PILLER'S LEGEND

*Series co-creator Michael Piller has returned to the final frontier.*

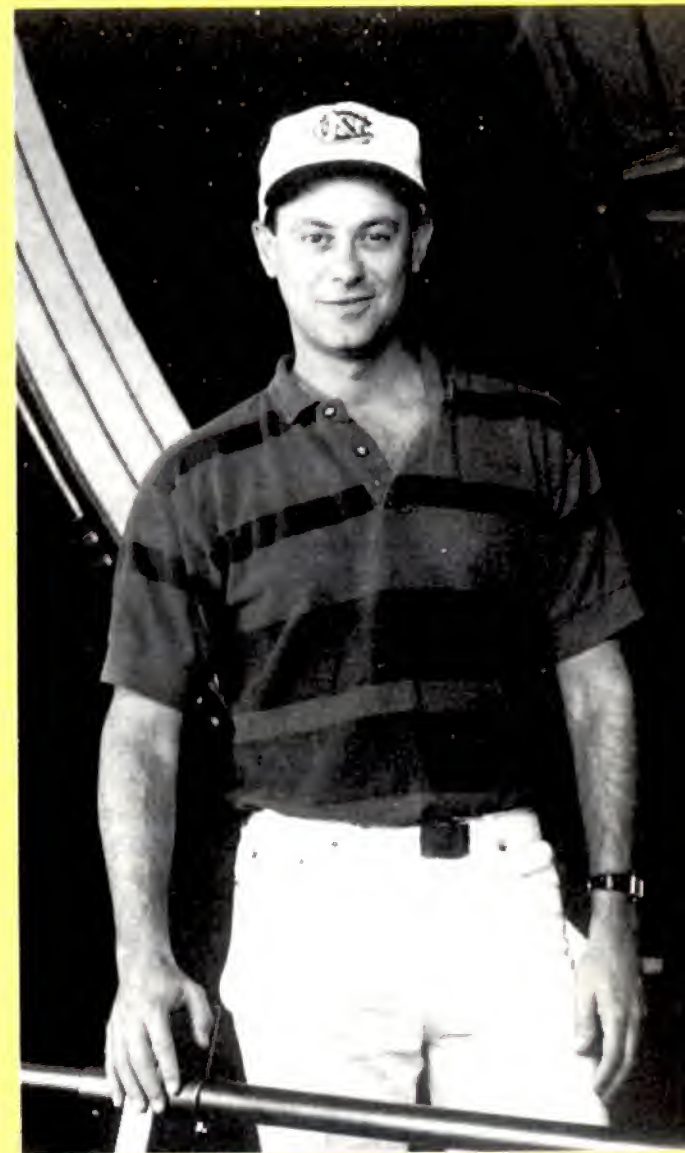
*By Dale Kutzera*

The 1994-95 STAR TREK season will be remembered for many things; the release of the first NEXT GENERATION movie, the launch of STAR TREK: VOYAGER, the addition of the *Defiant* to DEEP SPACE NINE. A quieter, but no less significant milestone was the gradual departure of executive producer Michael Piller from day-to-day oversight of the STAR TREK franchise he helped create. From the beginning of the DS9 season, Piller relinquished increasing responsibility to producer Ira Behr in order to focus on the creation of VOYAGER. Then as VOYAGER gained its space legs, Piller, while still involved in the show, ceded day to day oversight to Jeri Taylor as he turned his attention to his new series, LEGEND. But LEGEND flopped in the ratings and was not renewed by UPN. After a short hiatus, by August Piller was back in the saddle at VOYAGER, overseeing the series he helped to create.

"I've done STAR TREK for seven years," said Piller, when he left to work on LEGEND. "It has been the best job I've ever had. But you've got to let go, and you've got to move on. You need new creative challenges. And it was just simply time for me."

Early last season, Piller had officially stepped down as executive producer of DS9, taking on the role of creative consultant. On VOYAGER he continued to read and give notes although he was not able to write after the first two episodes. "Moving away from DS9 has been very painful. I'm very closely involved with VOYAGER in terms of story development and breaking stories and being here on a daily basis for everybody to talk to, giving detailed notes on every script and story. But I have pulled back in order to accommodate my schedule on LEGEND. I just couldn't do three shows.

LEGEND grew out of Piller's desire to get away from STAR TREK. "The studio asked me what I wanted to do next," said



Piller aboard DS9, back at VOYAGER after his solo effort for UPN, LEGEND, failed to click.

Piller. "Somebody suggested I do a comedy on another planet. I started thinking that there are an awful lot of people out there who are chasing STAR TREK. I don't want to chase myself. I've done a lot in the future, but at the same time I've learned a lot about the audience that I am serving with [STAR TREK]. I know that they like science and adventure and the sort of 'bonhomie' of all that. And so I asked myself, what could I do that would not be in the same genre, so that I would not be lost in



Piller with Patrick Stewart on the set of TNG, with Rick Berman, one of the architects of TNG's success, Piller went on to co-create DS9 and VOYAGER with Berman, before leaving to do LEGEND.

this crowd of science fiction wannabes? That would have its own separate identity, but would appeal to the same audience?

"And what I came up with was using a different technology, the technology of the 19th century, to draw a very light-hearted western adventure. It's very quirky, very character-oriented, and marries the inventions of that era—Nicola Tesla, if you will, is the role model of the John DeLancie role—with the other thing I really like about STAR TREK, which is that you have non-violent heroes who are very well-educated. Those are the kind of role models that I like to see on television. The characters that I have created are very verbal, highly educated, who use their communication skills and their technical skills to solve problems. They are clever and smart, as opposed to being the violent and punching-out type of heroes."

In LEGEND Piller hoped to take the same camaraderie and adventure of STAR TREK and apply it to the Old West. The series revolved around a quirky inventor (John DeLancie) who has taken on the persona of a dime-novel hero, Nicodemus Legend. "This goes on a while until the writer,

who lives in San Francisco, finds out," said DeLancie at a recent STAR TREK convention. "So the writer, played by Richard Dean Anderson, decides to come to Colorado. He meets my character and is taken up in the whirlwind of my inventions. We go off in hot-air balloons, quadrupedals, and all kinds of Jules Vernian electrical adventures each week. Very witty, historical characters are in it, the production values are high, and we're all hoping the audience will like it."

Noted Piller, "The west was in a very optimistic time period, which is another lesson I learned from Gene Roddenberry's vision. If it is a really nice place to go to, people will want to go there every week. It helps them get away from the ugliness that they see on their TV screens every night. This is a time and a place where one man could make a difference. I was very confident that if audiences liked STAR TREK, they were going to like LEGEND."

Thirteen episodes of LEGEND were initially ordered by UPN. The series was largely overlooked in its original Tuesday evening time-slot and by the time it was moved to follow VOYAGER on Monday evenings, it was too late. Even VOYAGER's loyal audience failed to stick around, despite the presence of everyone's favorite omnipotent being, John DeLancie, and the occasional STAR TREK reference. When LEGEND was not renewed by UPN (only VOYAGER returned for the fledgling network's sophomore season), Piller returned as co-executive producer of VOYAGER.

Noted Jeri Taylor, Piller's VOYAGER colleague, "Michael wanted LEGEND to go, but he didn't want it to go last year. But that happened, and he had to struggle with that, and it wasn't easy for him. He wasn't able to do any writing for us, because he was the only writer working on LEGEND. I was hopeful that whenever LEGEND finished its shoot that he would come back to us, because he was a valuable part of a mix." □

**“Michael Piller felt that there was an error made with DS9 because the first episodes were too soft. He wanted this to be high concept.”**

**—Producer Jeri Taylor—**

sat here for days and days working out character arcs for the early shows."

Noted Braga, "Our intention was to do high-concept episodes where the crew bonds through adventure. Ironically, the emphasis would be on character in those first handful of episodes. When you look at those first episodes you think, 'Good story lines, but boy, they're devoting a lot of time to the characters.'"

Of the scores of pitches Braga heard, several were passed on to the producers only to be rejected. Considering that each episode would further define not only the crew of the *Voyager*, but the alien environments they encountered, each idea was closely scrutinized. The particular differences between TNG and DS9 were especially hard to grasp for freelancers who were coming in with only the bible as background. While the appearance, voice and mannerisms of Spock, Bones, Data, and Worf are all immediately recognizable, the crew of VOYAGER only existed on paper as casting had not been finalized. "It's a challenge, but it's also very exciting," said O'Connell. "It's a whole new ball game. With VOYAGER some of the rules have changed while others have stayed the same. Because of that it's going to make VOYAGER really exciting for me as a viewer, but it's going to make things very difficult for me as a writer. It is hard to find a balance between following the old STAR TREK rules and coming up with something that is completely different."

Noted Braga, "It's exhilarating and terrifying, because it's a challenge. Week-to-week we have to come up with brand-new aliens and brand-new storylines, and with characters none of us really know. We had lots of lofty ideas about how the characters would be, and the plots we would set in place. It's funny, none of us really knew what to do with Zimmerman [the doctor]. We had no idea who he was, and what he would be. And then, as you start doing the episodes you realize these characters almost take on a life of their own. As it would turn out, Zimmerman would become the most popular character for us, and with the audience. We have a whole bunch of Zimmerman episodes. He's the most fun character to write and that is the character we were terrified we would have nothing to do with."

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Tuvok solves a film noir alien murder mystery a la Raymond Chandler in Piller's "Ex Post Facto," the producer's favorite first season episode.

off, it's up to drillmaster Tuvok to whip them into shape. This personable bottle show comes from the writing team of Ron Wilkerson and Jean Matthias, who have contributed, among other things, the story for TNG's last season fan-pleaser "Lower Decks." Both shows introduce a quartet of new crewmen, and view the senior staff, in this case Tuvok, from the perspective of the common man.

"We are getting the reputation as the writers who look after the little people," said Wilkerson. "But you write what they pay you for. The original concept for 'Learning Curve' came from a B-story Jean had. I felt strongly it should be an A-story in its own right. They immediately liked it. It's a bottle show and it pushed Tuvok's character in a direction he hadn't been in before.

"We knew they wanted to do a Tuvok story, and if we know they want a certain character-story we will direct a few pitches to that character. That's good business if nothing else. And we love Vulcans, Jean especially. She has a really good feel for Vulcans and is one of the only people I know who can raise one eyebrow. Tuvok gives us the great opportunity to play with Vulcans again. He's the first we've gotten to explore since Spock."

Noted Matthias, "One of the things that intrigued us was the chance to step out of the Starfleet persona. STAR TREK people are pretty darn nice and for trouble-making writers that can be a problem. In our early story treatment Dalby [Armand Schultz] was a much darker, angrier person. He was named after a kid who terrorized me in third grade. That changed a little to show he could be redeemed at the end. That's the way we found the focus, then it bloomed like a flower and took on a life of its own.



Tim Russ as Tuvok (r) in "Learning Curve," given the task by Janeway of shaping up unruly members of Chakotay's Maquis crew.

"There are reasons why the Starfleet lifestyle could chafe a person, and if you're thrown into it I don't think everyone would buck up and be a good Joe. There are going to be a few who have a real problem with this and I think that helps make the universe a little more real if they are not so perfect. On VOYAGER there is more opportunity for conflict and growth and change in our own people, something I think TNG lacked on occasion. Our heroes were so perfect you had to drug or disease them to get them to loosen up a little."

## THE SEASON THAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN

STAR TREK: VOYAGER was scheduled to air four more episodes in its first season and four were produced prior to the summer hiatus. The United Paramount Network, however, decided to hold these four episodes in order to jump-start UPN's second season (VOYAGER was the network's only returning show). The idea was to open the season in late August, a full month before the other networks would be airing new shows. UPN hoped to attract viewers to its new schedule of programs by positioning their first run material against the competition's reruns.



Robert Picardo as Doc in "Projections," watches his arm disappear when stuck past the projector range in sickbay, just checking.

The decision didn't sit well with VOYAGER's producers, who have been accustomed to the relative autonomy provided by syndication. "Personally, I wish we would have aired those last four as part of the first season," said Brannon Braga, "but that's not our decision to make. I feel they were our best episodes of the year. We had a great season finale, a show where Barclay returns, and some really high concept episodes."

The original airing order would have been "Projections," the Barclay episode; "Elogium," Ken Billers' first STAR TREK script, in which Kes becomes fertile; "Twisted," a controversial high-concept story by Braga; and finally "The 37's," the finale in which the *Voyager* lands on a planet and Janeway meets her hero, Amelia Earhardt. "The 37's" was ultimately used as the opener of the second season, followed by the first episode filmed after hiatus, "Initiations," then "Projections" and "Elogium" were kept in sequence, followed by "Non Sequitor," the second new episode filmed, and finally, "Twisted." For those of you who like to consider production order when looking back on story and character development, here is the season that might have been:

"Did I program Paris to be so annoying?"

—Doc

### PROJECTIONS

★★1/2

9/11/95. Production Number 117. Aired as: 203. Written by Brannon Braga. Directed by Jonathan Frakes.

The Doctor is activated to find the *Voyager* empty. Computer records indicate a massive Kazon attack has occurred and the crew has abandoned ship. The situation only becomes more puzzling as several crew members appear, but do not register on Doc's tricorder. Apparently the only life form on the ship is...the Doctor. Much to his confusion and counter to his program, the Doctor experiences injury and pain during a struggle with a Kazon warrior. If that isn't enough, Doc can roam freely about the ship thanks to a series of holographic generators Torres has rigged up, and is visited by TNG's fa-

The *Voyager* encounters a swarm of space-dwelling life forms in "Elogium" which prematurely trigger Kes' maternal instincts.



vorite nerd, Lt. Barclay.

If we are to believe Barclay, the Doctor is in fact a flesh and blood person, Doctor Lewis Zimmerman, and is trapped in a holodeck induced delusion. The *Voyager* and crew are mere holograms and everything he has experienced has been part of a protocol to test his new medical program. He is the real person, but unless he destroys the holographic *Voyager*, he will be trapped in his delusion forever. Can you tell this is a Brannon Braga script?

"Projections" is a perplexing tech-mystery and provides another moment in the spotlight for Robert Picardo's Doctor. Despite Braga's careful layering of one complication upon another, however, this bottle story can't help but lose steam in the middle. The premise is reminiscent of *Total Recall*, in which a messenger enters the hero's dream at one point to tell him that he is, in fact, dreaming. Such labyrinthine techno-mysteries rise and fall on their execution and "Projections" does not provide enough memorable character moments to lift this above its labored premise. One would have hoped for more humor from the stunt-pairing of STAR TREK's two greatest inferiority-complexes.



Kes (Jennifer Lien) is aghast to find herself eating insects in "Elogium" as she enters the fertile stage of Ocampa childbearing.

"Color change and provocative movements are frequently associated with mating rituals."

—Chakotay

### ELOGIUM

★★1/2

9/18/95. Production number: 118. Aired as: 204. Story by Jimmy Diggs & Steve J. Kay. Teleplay by Kenneth Biller and Jeri Taylor. Directed by Rick Kolbe.

A swarm of space-dwelling lifeforms create an electrophoretic field around *Voyager*, causing Kes to prematurely enter the elogium—the time of life when Ocampa bodies become fertile. As the elogium occurs only once, Kes and Neelix must struggle with the decision to reproduce as the crew works to free themselves from the swarm.

"Elogium" was executive story editor now producer Ken Biller's first effort for VOYAGER. Brought in to rework the story by Jimmy Diggs and Steve Kay, Biller eventually worked with Jeri Taylor on the final script. It was during the story breaking and revision process that Biller began to feel he was auditioning for a permanent position. It's easy to see why the staff wanted him on board. "Elogium" moves in a clear direction, the tech-rationale is plausibly handled, and there are some nice character moments, particular a scene in which a distraught Kes talks about her father.

On the other hand, the early stage in which this script was developed is evident from the one-note characterizations of Neelix as jealous suiter and Torres as the trigger-happy Klingon. Jennifer Lien, whose Kes was largely ignored in the other first season episodes, shivers and shakes with conviction, but has yet to really establish what unique qualities set Kes apart from other adorable, perky aliens with funny ears. What role she serves on the ship, other than as a sounding board for Doc and

continued on page 79

# STAR TREK VOYAGER

## DESIGNING THE TITLE SEQUENCE

*How this stirring series of sci-fi vistas almost never happened.*

By Dale Kutzera

It's only 104 seconds long, but represents thousands of hours of work and the artistry of scores of effects producers, model makers, and computer animators. The credit sequence of VOYAGER may be the most lyrical series of science fiction vistas ever put on television. Oddly enough, it almost never happened.

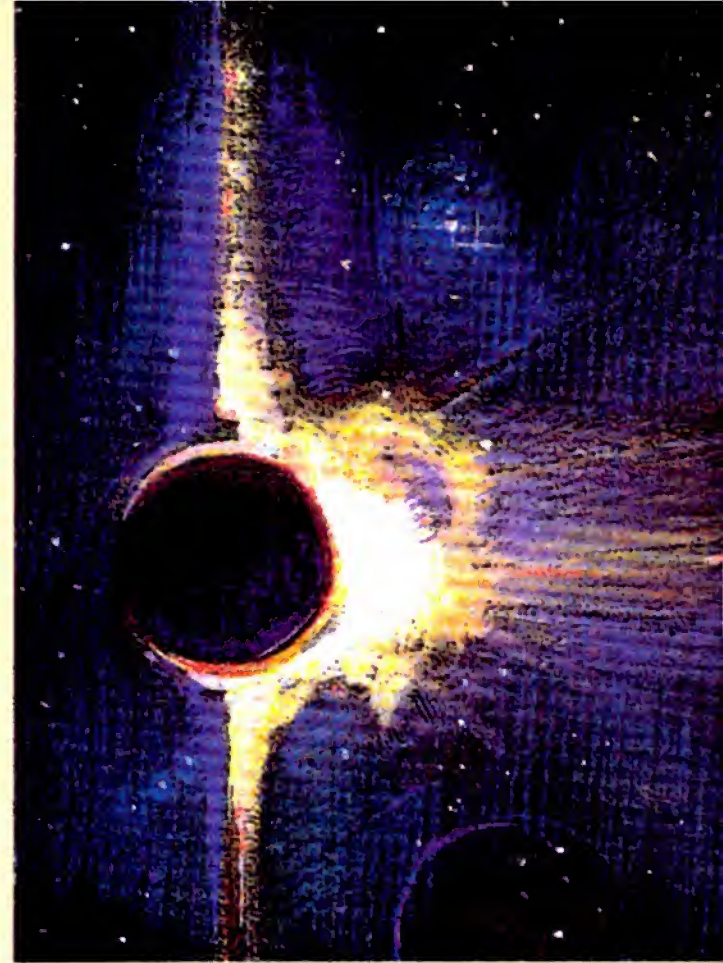
"There was a question about whether to have a main title sequence," said Jeri Taylor, "because as you may know, networks now just want to start the show and get going. Rick Berman, Michael Piller and I felt that a title sequence was part of STAR TREK and that people would want to see it. But we knew it would have to be really good to keep them watching."

Visual effects producer Dan Curry mapped out the title sequence while working on the effects for the VOYAGER pilot. "Everybody was really busy," he said. "We had the pilot going and the feature was being wrapped up. We wanted to do something that was in the STAR TREK tradition, yet was a departure from what we had done before. For the TNG title sequence Gary Hutzel and Rob Legato put in lots of hours to create the illusion of one big continuous

sweep through space. With DS9 I wanted a ballet around the space station, with elegant moves that wove in and out of each other. Because VOYAGER was to be taking place in a part of the universe we hadn't been, I felt we should get into new images. We just talked concept back and forth and came up with the idea of having the *Voyager* go to some really amazing places and situations."

Curry drew inspiration from some of the great science fiction art of this century to create eye-popping vistas and never-before-seen phenomenon. As time grew short, he enlisted the creative talents of Santa Barbara Studios, the CGI firm that had created part of the DS9 title sequence, the comet/library in the TNG episode "Masks," and whose work on THE ASTRONOMER documentary series he had admired.

"Dan Curry came to us wanting to design the entire opening," said Santa Barbara's Eric Guaglione, who brought Curry's vision to life, "but he was so wrapped up in the production of the show he didn't have the time. He had seen some of the work we had done for a film called OTHER WORLDS, produced by the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum, and there were a couple shots there that peaked his interest. One of them was a solar flare lifting up off



Effects producer Dan Curry mapped out the shots.

the surface of the sun and another was a shot where you fly through the rings of a planet. He wanted to do something like that but *a la* STAR TREK."

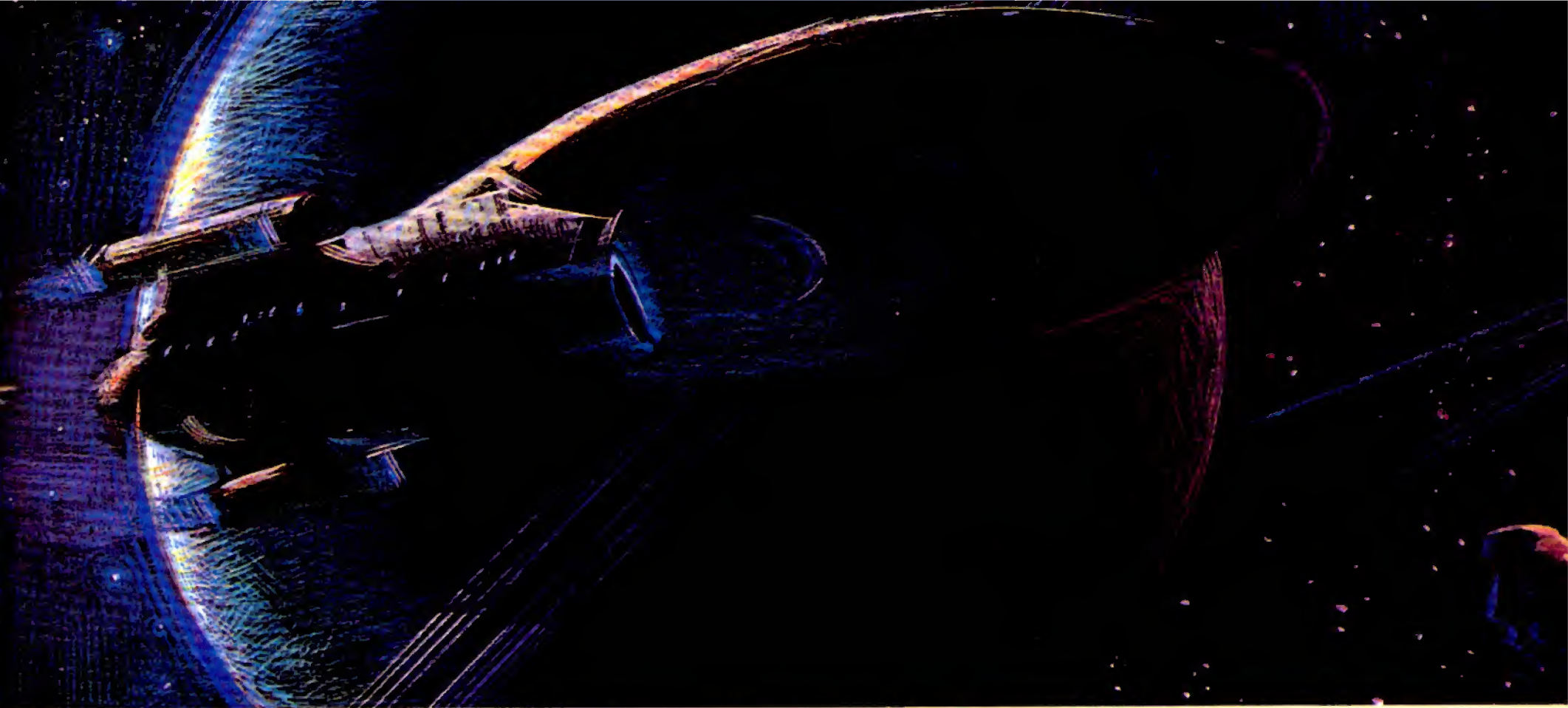
Santa Barbara looked upon the sequence as an opportunity to push their own technology as well, including their proprietary software, Dynamation, that is used to create the moving, organic elements such as solar flares and vaporous clouds. Working with artist Eric Tiemens, a series of nine pages of storyboards and color sketches were created and presented to Curry. These were refined and winnowed down to six. "You have to be clear on what you're doing before you actually do anything," said Santa Barbara producer Sid Bailey. "You can't afford to be doing R and D especially on television projects like this where your turnaround time is quite short. So we came in with the basic concepts for them to critique and give us direction on where they want to go. In this case, the idea was to come up with a half dozen different space phenomena and see the ship interacting with each one of them."

Curry provided Guaglione and his fellow animator John Grower with several loose concepts and the general emotional tone the sequence should convey. "We are in deep space and it should feel very myste-

The sequence, Curry's vision brought to life in CGI by Santa Barbara Studios, the solar flare (left) inspired by their Smithsonian short film OTHER WORLDS.







Erik Tiemens' design of the final shot in the sequence. Co-executive producers Rick Berman, Michael Piller and Jeri Taylor championed the idea to UPN.

rious, like you're lost," said Guaglione. "One conscious decision we made in the presentation is to work from something that starts warm—the solar flare—and move into the cooler tones. We get more and more mysterious with these greens and blues, seeing things we are not accustomed to seeing here on Earth. Then at the end of the sequence we wanted a warm friendly feeling as well, so in the last shot, as the *Voyager* comes out of the eclipse and moves to the other side of the planet, it's flying toward a very warm nebula."

Using a low resolution CGI *Voyager*, based on three-quarter drawings of the ship by Rick Sternbach, the Santa Barbara team created wire-frame animatics of each shot to pin down the pace and timing of the sequence. These animatics were also reviewed by the producers and a video copy was given to composer Jerry Goldsmith who was working on the theme music.

"It started out as a 90-second opening," said Guaglione. "A lot of the scene lengths were dependent on the needs of the title cards. We started to block out the scenes knowing we needed certain title cards here and there in time. You have to make sure your eye has enough time to look at the title and the ship. One thing that wasn't locked

down was how many title cards there would be. As a result everything got lengthened out just a bit because they wanted to have one or two more title cards than they originally thought."

With only eight weeks to create the complicated sequence, the decision was made for Santa Barbara to concentrate on the background environments, while the *Voyager* ship would be added later. In several instances, practical model photography was intercut with CGI model work and the CGI model from Amblin Imaging was pasted into Santa Barbara's backgrounds.

The sequence begins with an enormous CGI solar flare from a seething, giant sun. Amblin's *Voyager* ship soars under the arc of stellar matter, which reveals the series logo. "I wanted to have the ship duck underneath the bridge of the flare," said Curry. "Amblin did that ship and then we composited it at Digital Magic. We also did something similar to the DS9 titles. When we see the DS9 logo, I had the runabout fly in front of the letters and then it flares. I like those little surprises. For VOYAGER I asked Santa Barbara to give us a matte of the solar ejecta going by. Using that matte we were able to let the ejecta wipe on and reveal the VOYAGER lettering." An added sense of

realism was gained by electronically airbrushing different bevel planes in the VOYAGER logo off of which the illumination of the ejecta is reflected.

The flare was created by Mark Wendell, using Santa Barbara's Dynamation software. "The boiling surface has to do with all these vectors," said Guaglione. "It wasn't the standard slap-a-texture-map-on-it shot. It was something that was calculated frame to frame. Generally computer modeling allows you to create rigid shapes, but as a result it's hard to create organic shapes when you want to apply some physical dynamics to it. How do you tell the computer to model rain or snow? It's not an easy thing to do. What it really is, is a set of physics: we want things to fall as a result of gravity, how heavy they are, how big they are, and so on. What Dynamation does is allow you to set up all the rules based on gravity and friction. You can also digitize some general shapes that allow the geometry to fall in a certain path."

The data Santa Barbara used to create the low-res ship movement was sent to Amblin where the high-res model was rendered. The ship was then lit in a yellow light to match the background sun. "What I did was lower the background frame of

Santa Barbara used Dynamation, their proprietary software package to create moving organic elements like vaporous clouds (left) for *Voyager* to penetrate.





Erik Tiemens' title sequence design for Santa Barbara Studios. Inset: The shot features a motion-control element of the *Voyager* model as it files up amid Santa Barbara's computer-generated rings.

their animatic and figure out the frame they were using and got it to the point where our *Voyager* was over their *Voyager*," said Amblin's John Parenteau. "Then I just put a light on it, beamed it back to the *Voyager*, turned it on very bright, and made it yellow. Then to add the top light we cloned that light and made a big spread of light across the *Voyager*."

The next shot of *Voyager* is of the actual five-foot long model. Curry, supervisor David Stipes and coordinator Joe Bauer spent months at their motion-control vendor, Image G, working out test shots of the ship using a styrofoam mock-up. As they tested different movements and angles, they discovered that one of the *Voyager*'s most attractive angles is looking up at the ship's underbelly. The distant nebula was created by Santa Barbara, painted digitally using Adobe Photoshop software.

One of the most talked about shots is without doubt the cloud shot or "wake" shot as Guaglione calls it. As the *Voyager* cuts a swath through a layer of space gas, its head-

lights cut beams into the fog. "The guys at Santa Barbara have a program that could create clouds and it sounded like a great idea so we went with it," said Curry. "That was an interesting case in that the ship was generated by Amblin to match the lighting requirements of the background created by Santa Barbara. Santa Barbara did the actual compositing, taking an exobite of information from Amblin and incorporating it into their system."

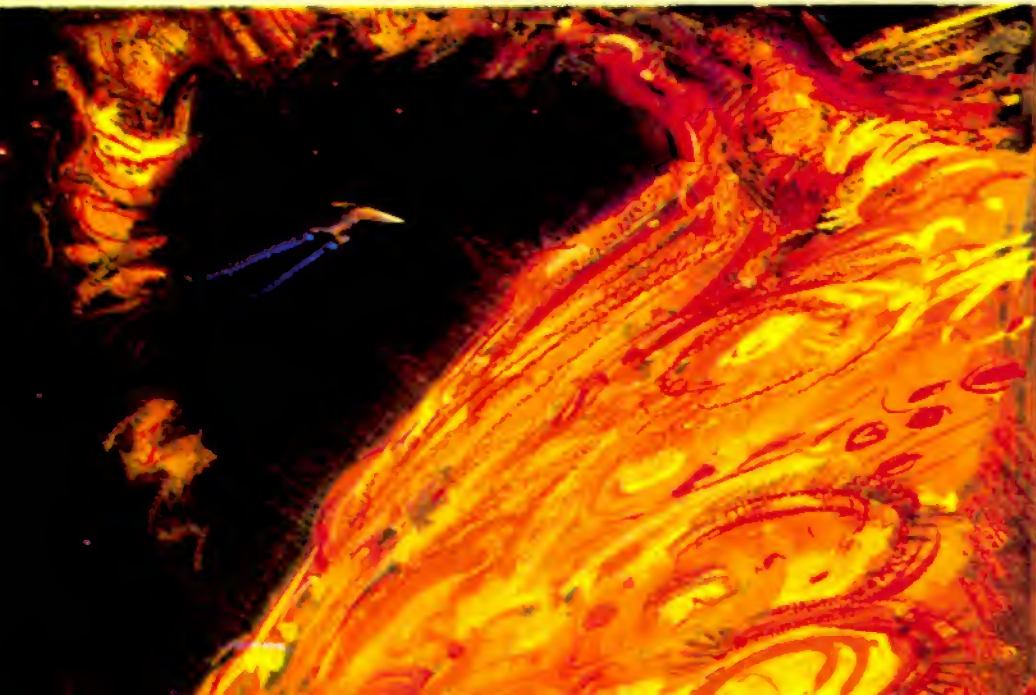
For most of the shots, Santa Barbara provided Curry with various elements to be composited in a digital editing bay. The complexity of the wake shot required them to render it entirely by computer. "It required real balance to get the ship into the gas and clouds," said Guaglione. "The stars had to go behind the ship, some of the gas had to go behind it, some in front of it, and then all those cloud layers on top. It would have been difficult for us to provide all these layers and mattes. We may have done even more compositing providing there was more time, but it became so tight that we



couldn't handle all the compositing. You may notice in the rest of the shots the ship is on top, so it became easier with the other shots."

The fourth shot involved a complex movement across the surface of a frozen asteroid, then a quick pan and tilt as the *Voyager* zooms overhead. Once again, a CGI background was married to a motion control ship, creating a weightless, hand-held sensation. "An interesting thing on that shot is originally the foreground ice surface was an electronic matte painting," said Curry. "Rick Berman kept wanting to see more of a sense of roll and three dimensionality about it. Santa Barbara was able to take this 2-D painting and reinterpret it using their technology to give it a very convincing

Two key elements of Tiemens' title design, *Voyager* skirts the opening solar flare (left) and penetrates a gaseous cloud with the sperm-like look seen in 2001.



**“ Networks now just want to start the show and go. Rick Berman, Michael Piller and I felt a title sequence is part of STAR TREK.”**

**—Producer Jeri Taylor—**

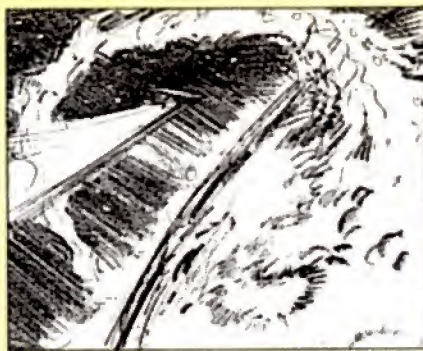
three-dimensional roll.”

Noted Guaglione, “When Dan and I first talked about that shot, the overall look was quite different. We were going to do an effect where you were a couple hundred feet up looking over this vast, strange, alien landscape. Rick Berman obviously had something different in mind. He wanted something up close, that it was craggier and stranger than the tranquil landscape we were presenting.”

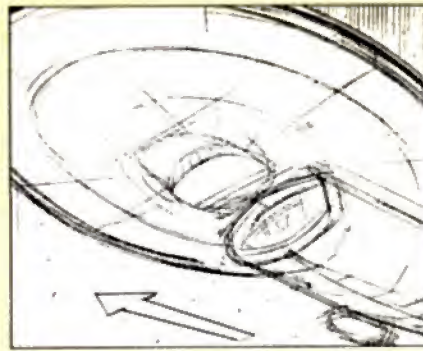
Berman’s additional requirement—that their new, craggier, landscape roll forward in a 3-D fashion—was something of a trick for a 2-D digitalmatte painting. “We weren’t planning on doing geometry for this because of the time frame,” said Guaglione. “The shot was designed with a matte painting so we could have a painter working concurrently with us while we were doing CG. Berman insisted the shot would only work if the thing were rolling toward us.” To create the illusion of movement, Guaglione took a black and white copy of the painting and processed it through a modeling program that brought the white areas forward and sent the black areas into the distance. The color painting was applied over this geometry and the result was then rolled and tilted. “If you look at it again you’ll see there is a lot of depth that goes from the corner of the lower left frame off into the distance. The technique was very successful.”

This ice-asteroid shot dissolves to a scene in which the viewer passes up through the shimmering crystals of a planet’s Saturn-like rings, to see the *Voyager* skim across the surface. The sharp clarity of the ice chunks, all computer generated, were enhanced by a shimmering sound effect added during post-production. “We were seeing that as a planet with ice rings and if you notice there are reflections in the ice,” said Curry. “It’s another case where the ship is a motion-control miniature over a computer-generated background. Santa Barbara delivered to us their background on exobite, a storage format, and then we translated that information to D1 video. Once it’s on D1 we could manipulate it as any other piece of footage and we composited our ship over that in our motion-control bay.”

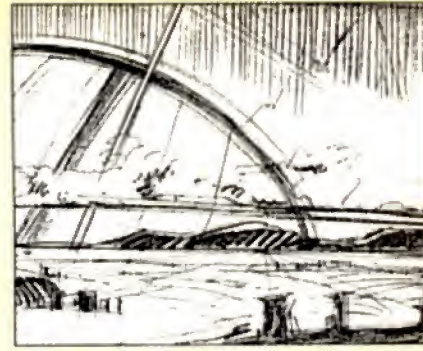
Complicating this motion-control shot



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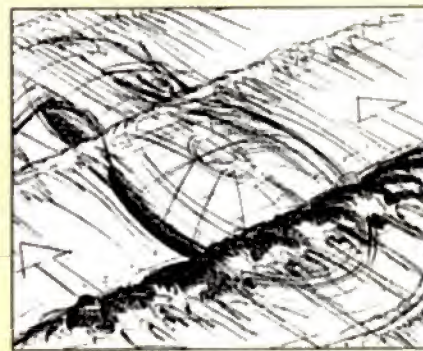
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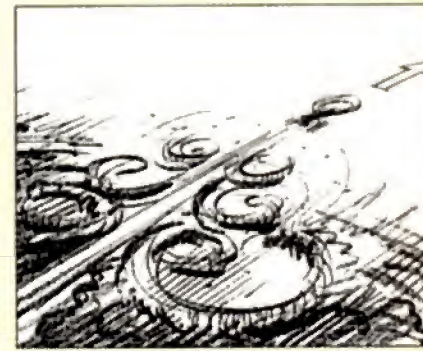
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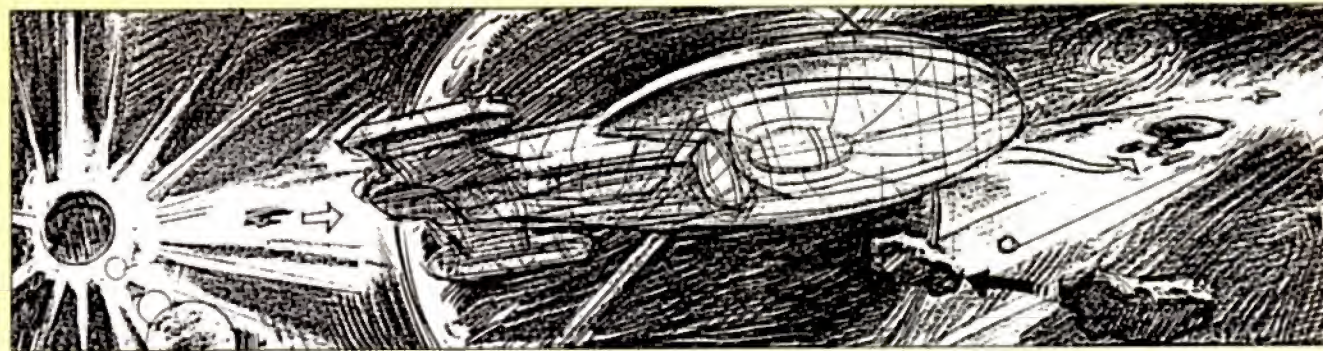
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Key elements of Tiemens’ nine-page storyboard for the title sequence submitted by Santa Barbara to VOYAGER visual effects producer Dan Curry and then rendered as animatics for final approval.

was the fact that it had to perfectly match the reflections already created as part of the background. “That shot was inspired by one we did for THE ASTRONOMERS and this time we decided to take it a bit further and put you smack dab in the rings,” said Guaglione. “Because this wasn’t Saturn, we could be a bit more expressive with it and do something where it looks like a wet road that creates these nice reflections. We pick up on that by reflecting the ship, the moon, and a bit of the nebula on the rings. Dynamation spread out all the bits of ice. It’s a mixture of that and a texture map onto a surface. That’s why you get that real 3-D sense as you pass through it. If you look low in the frame there is still a fair amount of depth with lots of bits hanging above and below the rings.”

As the *Voyager* model was still under construction when the background was created, Guaglione’s reflection of the ship was a best guess. “What we didn’t know at the time was what the ship looked like. So we took our low-res ship, made it kind of grayish, made the engines blue, then blurred it and reflected it down onto the surface of the ring. It was kind of seat-of-the-pants, but it worked well.

The final shot of the sequence involved the sun bursting from behind a planet’s moon, flooding the *Voyager* with back light and casting a shadow of the ship into the stellar dust. “We could have shot that with the model ship, but our track wasn’t long enough,” said Curry. “We also wanted to

take advantage of CGI technology to get the ship to stretch at the end as it goes into warp. We didn’t want to do slit-scan photography on the model, which is amazingly laborious. When we composited that shot we had to make sure to take the planet down until the solar flare hit it with light. Otherwise you never saw the end of the ring shot, because the planet was so bright. We had do some interesting finagling there to make that an elegant transition.”

The dramatic, long shadows cast by the *Voyager* were a relatively simple composite trick. “That shot was something I’ve always wanted to do with STAR TREK,” said Guaglione. “I thought it would be great to have this black environment in which you can barely make out the ship, then the moon moves out of the way and you have this enormously bright light—almost a complete white-out. This provides the opportunity to show the long shadows coming off the ship. Some comments on the net said there is no atmosphere in space and you can’t have shadows. Well, so what? It looks cool.

“The shadows were long triangles that were carefully parented with the ship so wherever the ship moved, the triangles go with it. Then I rendered the triangles separately, blurred them heavily, then laid them back into the image to take out some of the fog effect. That makes it look like there is real perspective going on. As the ship was rolling and turning so were the shadows.” □

Many of the long-term story arcs were worked out in numerous brainstorming meetings between the executive producers and Braga. "We had a good, solid three or four weeks of conceptual meetings," said Braga. "And at the same time, we were developing the action stories, high-concept sci-fi stories. We knew we wanted to do a Maquis/Star Fleet adjustment episode; and that it needed to come early. It turned out that would be 'Parallax.' The bible said the Chief Engineer is B'Elanna Torres. Well, she's not made chief engineer in the pilot. Her earning the job probably should be her first episode, which can also embody the Maquis-Star Fleet conflict that is going on, because if you make a Maquis chief engineer, there are lots of Starfleet people in line for that job who are going to be pretty pissed off. So that was a good character situation to exploit."

These conceptual meetings also addressed seemingly mundane, but critical production problems. There was, for instance, great discussion and controversy over whether or not the Maquis crew members should be given Starfleet uniforms or not (it was finally decided to distinguish them by their own insignia collar-pin). Despite the built-in political differences between the Maquis and Starfleet members of the crew, the producers were careful to maintain the supportive, family atmosphere that has become a STAR TREK mainstay.



Chakotay (Robert Beltran) and Ethan Phillips as Neelix, the Delta Quadrant jack of all trades who joined the Voyager crew when they became stranded.

"It's important to note the differences and what we wanted to be similar," said Braga. "This is STAR TREK after all and the philosophies and underpinnings of STAR TREK would remain the same. What's different is you have built-in conflict on the ship and you cannot rely on anything NEXT GENERATION would rely on. If you can blame NEXT GENERATION for anything in its final years, it started to rely a little too heavily on the usual suspects—Romulans, Klingons, political situations within the Federation—and you started to lose a little bit of the edge of the STAR TREK franchise, which is boldly going and discovering new people and new planets.

"That's the main difference in VOYAGER. For me personally, I saw it as the X-FILES of STAR TREK. I've never seen THE

X-FILES, but I know its premise and I kind of see VOYAGER as keeping the audience guessing as to what's going to happen week after week. They're in the Delta Quadrant and the Delta Quadrant is a big, scary place, where nothing is what you expect it to be. So, it has been my effort to come up with stories that are incredibly different, incredibly strange, and keep you off balance."

### CASTING HELL

To find the bodies and voices that would populate these new stories, the producers turned to veteran casting director Nan Dutton. STAR TREK's usual casting director, Junie Lowery Johnson was preoccupied having twins.

An international search was started with casting offices in Los Angeles, New York, Toronto, and London. Actors were read and videotaped in these cities and those tapes making the grade were sent on to Dutton for review. In many cases Dutton would pre-read the prospective actors, so that only the best were sent on to meet the producers. Even with these elimination rounds, Taylor, Berman, and Piller personally interviewed and auditioned hundreds of actors.

"The process was grueling. It lasted months and months. It was half my life time," said Taylor. "Particularly the search for Janeway. I'm sure that we saw, read, contacted, and checked out the interest and availability of every actress in the world between the ages of 30 and 60. We knew she

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## DELTA QUADRANT ALIENS



Jennifer Lien as Kes, Neelix's Ocampa lover, with a life span of only nine years, a fast learner.

From the VOYAGER Bible: *Neelix is an alien male unlike any we've ever seen, in that he comes from a part of the galaxy that has been heretofore unexplored. He's a strange one—small, squat, and charming. He's part scavenger, trader, con man, procurer, and sage. His life has not been an easy one, but he has toughed it out—surviving by his wits and instincts in a dangerous part of space.*

*Neelix has developed the capacity to be all things to all people. You want a guide? I'm a guide. You want a weapon? I'm an arms trader. You want a cook? I'm a gourmet chef. He's the ultimate in flexibility and a jack of many, many trades.*

*Kes is Neelix's Ocampa lover. She is delicate, beautiful*

*young—and has a life span of only nine years. Neelix adores her, is protective of her, is insanely jealous of her. Kes doesn't give him any reason for those feelings: she loves Neelix and is loyal to him. But she is inquisitive and eager to absorb knowledge about this starship and its fascinating crew. She is an innocent who sees humanity through a fresh perspective, and the crew of the Voyager never cease to fascinate her.*

It was a difficult role to cast," said Michael Piller. "To find someone who could bring both an attractive intelligence and performing skills. We read a lot of people for that part, but when Jennifer Lien walked into the room, she was 19 years old. No one ever saw this character as a 19 year-old. In order to get the maturity and intelligence, you

have to find somebody who has lived a while. Jennifer had this deep, throaty voice and eyes that seemed to have all the knowledge of man in them, and it was just, "Wow!" We knew from that moment. We had more trouble finding her hair than we had finding the actress."

"She is amazing," agreed Taylor. "She is quite unassuming. You walk onto the set and don't even notice her. She is in a corner quietly doing her thing. But turn the camera on and here is this incredibly strong presence and this voice that comes out. She is really astonishing."

Jennifer Lien's television credits include the role of Roanne in the shortlived ABC situation comedy PHENOM, and the role of Hannah in NBC's ANOTHER WORLD.

Dale Kutzera

# STAR TREK VOYAGER

## EXECUTIVE STORY EDITOR

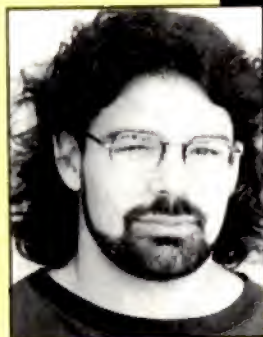
*Writer Ken Biller came in to pitch and got drafted as part of the new series' writing staff.*

*By Dale Kutzera*

The actors may own their characters, and the director may hold the vision for each individual episode, but we all know that on episodic television, the writer is the principal creative force. They may be called producers, or executive producers, or story editors, or even writers, but the job still boils down to dreaming up stories. It is of particular interest, then, when a new voice is added to the regular writing staff of STAR TREK. Ken Biller, VOYAGER's executive story editor, is such a voice, the first new staff member since DS9 was launched and the envy of aspiring TREK writers everywhere.

The first thing you notice about Biller, besides his wild hair, is that he talks fast. Very fast. Sitting, or more accurately crouching, on a chair with his legs tucked up beneath him, he seems ready to pounce on the next idea that enters his head. Unlike Brannon Braga, Ron Moore, Rene Echevarria, and Robert Hewitt Wolfe (the "kids" as DS9's executive producer Ira Behr calls them), Biller is not a home-grown TREK writer. A theatre major at Brown University, he spent his first years out of school in New York as a production associate to theatrical producer Michael Fraser. After producing the musicals *Nunsense* and *Mail* ("a hit in L.A., but a flop in New York."), Biller worked as an assistant stage director at the Lyric Opera in Chicago before landing in Los Angeles.

Through the contacts he made in the theater business, Biller was hired at CBS as a manager of drama series development. When Fox hired him away, this time as di-



Ken Biller



Roxann Biggs-Dawson as B'Elanna Torres turned all Klingon in "Faces," Biller's second script for the show, based on a story by Jonathan Glassner.

rector of drama series development, he found himself working with such top TV producers as Stephen J. Cannell and Aaron Spelling, developing shows like MELROSE PLACE, THE HEIGHTS, and BRISCO COUNTY JR. The job of reading scripts, taking pitches, and working with writers to develop material convinced Biller that writing was where he belonged. "These people seemed to be having a lot more fun and making more money than I was," he said. "I had always written and had a friend, Chris Brancato, who was

writing, and through an agent I knew, we were hired as a writer-producer team for Spelling."

Biller and Brancato worked as executive story editors for one season on BEVERLY HILLS 90210 and later wrote two pilots for Fox and one for CBS, as well as freelance scripts for such diverse shows as RENEGADE, and THE X-FILES (called "Eve" and involving cloned women.) When his stint with Spelling ended, Biller began to pursue individual projects including work on a novel and a short film. As money became tight, he remembered an offer his friend Rene Echevarria had made about pitching STAR TREK. "I kept saying, 'I don't know how to write that stuff. I'm not a science-fiction person.' I had seen all the STAR TREK movies and was familiar with the original series as a casual fan, but was anything but a Trekker. With the possible exception of one of Rene's episodes that he had me watch at some dinner party, I had never really seen THE NEXT GENERATION. Then I found myself, at the end of last summer, a little broke so I called Rene and asked if there was any possibility of still doing a script and he mentioned this new show called VOYAGER."

At that time, VOYAGER's entire writing staff consisted of Michael Piller, Jeri Taylor, and Brannon Braga—small even by STAR TREK standards. After Jeri Taylor's enthusiastic reaction to Biller's writing samples, he was assigned to write the story that would become "Elogium." "I thought I'd take my script money and go home," Biller continued. "I had no sense at that point this was going to turn into an ongoing thing or that there was even a staff position available. I was just a freelance writer who got a gig and was happy about it."

Biller studied videotapes of past TREK



Paris (Robert Duncan McNeill) squares off against the Vidlians in "Faces," Biller's follow-up to the early first-season show "Phage," which introduced aliens decimated by a centuries-long plague.

episodes and read scripts to familiarize himself with TREK's unique five-act structure. "I read Piller's two parter, 'Best of Both Worlds,' and thought this is a really good show and started getting really excited about it. So I went home and wrote a draft of my script. Then they called me in for a notes meeting. I was told the response was very good, but the first words out of Michael Piller's mouth were, 'I don't think the teaser works at all.' I got so many notes I couldn't believe it, but I started to get the sense that I was auditioning for something. After I did my rewrite, Jeri Taylor said they loved how I handled the tech and asked if I had a science background. I said I specifically went to Brown University so I did not have to take a science course. I just made it all up."

Noted Braga, "Ken is the only writer in years who turned in a draft we thought was terrific, and when you see someone who shows a glimmer of potential in grasping STAR TREK, you hire him. He's evolved into a STAR TREK writer and he's become a good friend of mine. I don't know how we would have gotten through without him."

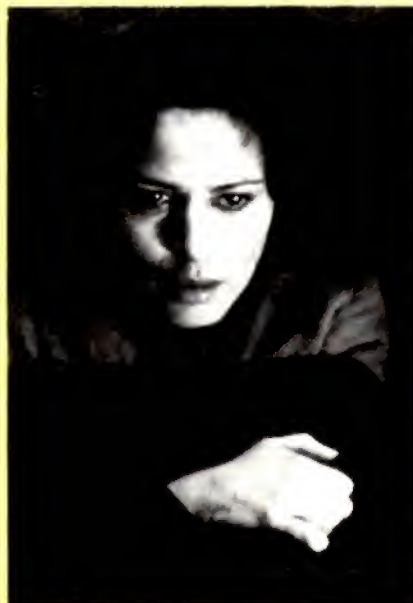
Believe it or not, Biller was a bit hesitant about accepting the offer to join the VOYAGER staff and put his other projects on hold, but eventually realized it was an opportunity he couldn't pass up. He was immediately set to work on his next script, which would become "Faces." In addition, he participated in the daily duties of a staff member: taking pitches from freelance writers, participating in story break sessions, and attending production and casting meetings for episodes he had written.

Oddly enough, as the weeks went by, Biller's name never appeared in the writing credits. His first script, "Elogium," dealt with a

space nebula and was held until the end of the season (ultimately to the beginning of the second season) so as not to conflict with "The Cloud." "Faces" was also slotted toward the end of the season due to budget considerations. "Of the 18 episodes shot subsequent to the two-hour pilot, I wrote four," said Biller, "including 'Faces' and 'Jetrel.' A network decision was made to air the final four shows produced first season as the first four episodes of the second season that premiered at the end of August instead of the end of September."

Although only two Biller episodes were aired first season, Biller's presence can be seen in the darker, more foreboding tone that distinguishes VOYAGER from TNG. In "Faces," one crewmember's face is grafted onto that of a phage-afflicted scientist, a "sick moment of inspiration" Biller described as his "proudest moment of STAR TREK." In "Jetrel," a dream sequence depicts Kes as a radiation burn victim, the skin of her face charred and peeling. "Brannon and I are both interested in some horror elements," said Biller. "'Jetrel' was a classic

"Faces" allowed Biller to explore the character of Torres (Roxann Biggs-Dawson) by splitting her into her human (l) and Klingon halves.



**“We aren’t going out of our way to be dark or do horror episodes. But Brannon Braga and I are both interested in horror elements.”**

**—Co-producer Ken Biller—**

horror movie moment—a guy stepping into the light with a grotesque disfiguration. It was made even more grotesque by the fact that he thought he was making himself more beautiful. We aren't going out of our way to be dark or to do horror episodes. If it hadn't fit organically into the story they wouldn't have let me do it. But it did fit one of the themes which was appearance and self-image. Our main character is dealing with her altered appearance and that was reflected in the villain of the piece who was clearly uncomfortable with his own appearance. The dream sequence in 'Jetrel' came out in the break, but I did research and saw footage of people with radiation poisoning. In the freelancer's version, Neelix had never been back to the planet, but it's more horrific if Neelix had seen the results of this. I was depressed for weeks while writing it."

Promoted to co-producer for VOYAGER's second season, Biller seems to have found a stable home at STAR TREK after his wide-ranging journey up the career ladder. "Most other guys were here for their whole writing careers," he said. "Having written for other shows I have a little different perspective on things. It's been a little tough toiling under the rules of the Gene Roddenberry universe. A lot of the things you learn about writing good drama, like character conflict, are things you have to really earn on STAR TREK. You can't start from that place. But good storytelling is good storytelling and good characterization is good characterization. That was born out of the fact that I have made this transition.

"If you told me even a year ago that I would be co-producer on the new STAR TREK series, I would have said, 'Forget it. It will never happen.' The irony is, whenever I'm done with this show I won't be able to get a job on another show, because everyone will say I'm a science-fiction writer. Every time you do something new in this business you have to reinvent yourself and prove to someone you can do it. I would never have gotten hired on VOYAGER on the basis of my 90210 scripts or even my X-FILES script. I had to show them this guy can write." □

Neelix? "Elogium," with its focus on "fraternization" feels like an early show, out of place at the end of the first season and even more so at the beginning of the second.

"Is it possible that this distortion ring is somehow changing the layout of the ship?"

—Torres

## TWISTED

★1/2

Production number 119. Aired as 206. 10/02/95. Story by Arnold Rudnick & Rick Hosek. Teleplay by Kenneth Biller. Directed by Kim Friedman.

A spatial distortion causes a system malfunction and changes the ship's structural layout, trapping the crew in an ever-changing maze of corridors. As *Voyager* is compressed and twisted by this unknown anomaly, the crew must locate one another, then split up to try to implement various plans that may stop the distortion's effect on the ship.

"Twisted" has something of a notorious reputation. Based largely on the reported convention comments of Robert Duncan McNeill and Robert Picardo, the internet rumors began to circulate that the episode was so bad that it would never be aired. Prognosticators speculated for months—Was it another incomprehensible Brannon Braga script? That it was completely rewritten by Michael Piller. That director Kim Friedman couldn't make heads or tails of the story. That large portions of it had to be rewritten and reshot.



Janeway finds herself in the grip of a spatial distortion in "Twisted," trapped on her own ship in a maze of ever-changing corridors.

"Twisted" was in fact written by Kenneth Biller, from a story by the freelance team of Arnold Rudnick and Rick Hosek. Perhaps the ultimate bottle show, this cost-saving episode used the standing sets over and over again. To keep the momentum of the story up, director Friedman kept the actors to a brisk pace, resulting in an episode that timed out short. To fill the hour, several scenes were extended by reshooting, or looping in additional dialogue.

Reputation aside, "Twisted" is no worse than many other repetitious, pointless TREK stories (TNG's final season episodes "Masks" and "Emergence" come to mind). It's a kind of house of mirrors for five acts. The plot complications come in the form of Janeway's debilitating encounter with the...whatever-it-is, an attempt to initiate something called a shock pulse, and the disappearance of Neelix—none of which are very compelling. Even more bizarre and unmotivated are the terse, one-dimensional behavior of the crew, and a smattering of unconvincing heartfelt chit-chat—no doubt the added padding to help the slim plot fill out the hour. Then, when the monster is twisting the door off its hinges, the crew does nothing—hardly the heroic behavior one expects from an action-adventure show.

## THE '37S

★★

8/28/95. Production number 120. Aired as: 201. Written by Jeri Taylor & Brannon Braga. Directed by Jim Conway.

When the *Voyager* crew finds a 1937 Ford pick-

# STAR TREK VOYAGER

## COMPUTER GRAPHICS STARSHIP

*At last CGI becomes a tool for ship shots on the final frontier.*

By Dale Kutzera

STAR TREK: VOYAGER presented visual effects producer Dan Curry's staff with the opportunity to try out new techniques and new tools that had evolved in recent years. The most tempting of these techniques was the amazing advancements in computer-generated effects.

"I felt that we were getting stale," said effects supervisor Ron Moore. "We had thousands of motion-control shots of the *Enterprise* and it just seemed it was time for us to do something different. Then shows came along like SEAQUEST and BABYLON 5 and they are doing a lot of shots that would be extremely difficult to achieve using motion-control technology. It's a whole different look. It's certainly not the look we want to go after—not that it's bad, it's just different. In some moves you see the ships are all moving and kinetic and you can't do that with a model. You want the *Voyager* to take off into infinity? We can't do that. But you can do that with a CGI ship."

Noted visual effects supervisor David Stipes, one of the early advocates of the technology, "To me the major advantage of moving from TNG to VOYAGER was that it allowed us to create a few fresh things technologically. I'm thinking specifically of creating a CGI *Voyager*." Stipes had even lobbied for a CGI *Enterprise* during TNG's last seasons. One episode in particular, "The Chase," would have benefited from



Technicians from Viewpoint Effects of Orem, Utah create the database for a digital version of the *Voyager* by touching a computer pen to points on a grid on the surface of the model.

the practice. "On 'The Chase' we were shooting all over the galaxy—warp here and warp there—and I have basically the one or two jumps to warp that we had in stock. When TNG was started, the first bits of material were shot at ILM and they shot the original jump to warp with slit scan and streak photography. That served us very well for seven years, but it was very difficult to do and expensive. I really wanted to do more, but found out that it would be prohibitive. I had been pushing to build a CGI *Enterprise*, but no one wanted to incur the expense at that point so I lived with the stock shots.

"I knew on *Voyager* we were going to have to do all these jumps to warp and streaking stars, and all these wonderful things come about efficiently with the use of computers. Thank God Dan Curry and [producer] Peter Lauritson and all the other producers were willing to incur the expense of not only creating a dimensional model, but a computer model. Now we can do jumps to warp and streaking stars much more efficiently and with a great deal of freedom."

There was never any doubt that a physical model of the *Voyager* would be constructed. Not only had the seven years of TNG firmly established a model-look to STAR TREK, but Curry and his team had become well-practiced at estimating the practicality of model photography, and the costs and time involved. "We have a commitment to using models," said Curry. "We feel for the reality and the look of our universe in most cases miniatures work best. We also know how long it's going to take and how much it's going to cost with greater predictability and so we can more accurately predict budgets. We have a very smoothly working system. We like the look of miniatures, and our supervisors are comfortable shooting them."

The physical limitations of motion control model photography, however, are often hard to live with. At five feet in length, the *Voyager* model was designed to be suitable for both long distance shots, and close-up "hull-scraper" shots. The size of the model, and the limited range of the motion-control rig it's filmed with place certain constraints on movement. "The upside with motion control and using models is that you know what you shoot is going to look real," said Joe Bauer. "The downside is that no matter how much track space you have you always wish you had 30 more feet. You're constantly trimming down your shots in every direction or redesigning with less movement."

Noted Stipes, "We've got a five-foot *Voyager* and only 50 feet of track and you can only get so far away from it. On a computer you don't have to worry about how far away you are. You can go to infinity. You can go above it, below it and around it. We can't do a 360-degree move on the dimensional model with the current hardware, because if we get around far enough pretty soon we're looking back at the mount that's holding the camera. So there are real limitations. Up to now we've always designed around it, but with CGI we have the freedom to design big sweeping shots."

At a 1993 Christmas party thrown by Newtek, the software firm responsible for the Lightwave 3-D modeling program, Stipes had a fortunate encounter with the animators from Amblin Imaging, the CGI house founded to provide effects for SEAQUEST DSV. "David was always interested in getting 3-D incorporated into

**“We are committed to using models. We feel for the reality and the look of our universe, in most cases, miniatures work best for us.”**

**—Producer Dan Curry—**

STAR TREK," said Amblin Imaging's John Gross, who, along with Grant Bouchet handle Amblin's work for VOYAGER. "He saw the benefits of that probably before many of the other producers over there did. And so we invited him over here and showed him the facility and when VOYAGER came up he saw the opportunity to get this stuff involved. He and Dan Curry came by and we talked about what we can do and showed them some examples and eventually we gave them a bid to build a virtual VOYAGER."

To demonstrate that they could match the model-look of the STAR TREK universe, Gross and Bouchet took some stock footage from TNG of a Maquis ship flying through space. Provided with the actual motion-control data from the shot, they created additional CGI ships, and married them into the shot, matching the camera movement so perfectly that the producers of DS9 couldn't tell the difference between the model ship and CGI ship. "That meant a lot to Dan Curry," said John Perenteau, vice-president and general manager with Tony Stutterheim of Amblin Imaging, "because Dan was wary. I think he had some bad experiences with CGI in the past and didn't feel it was quite there yet. But when we turned out their flight tests and people couldn't tell the difference, Dan started to realize that maybe we have finally conquered whatever barrier there had been before."

But could computer animation match the STAR TREK look, which has been built upon models for decades? Could a CGI *Voyager* be edited next to the vast majority of model *Voyager* shots, filmed in the motion control studio at Image G? "To me, it became imperative that we were able to add CGI," said Ron Moore, "but we've established the STAR TREK look with models—there are some things that are just fun to do with models. And we have every intention of taking a shot we've done CGI and cutting it perhaps right next to a model shot. So the challenge for the computer people is to retain the look."

The Amblin team began with the digital data from a laser scan of the actual *Voyager* model conducted by Cyberscan of Glendale, California. With this as a base they proceeded to detail the wire-frame model, cutting the many beveled windows into the

*Voyager* body, adding surface detail such as the phaser array, and building the nacelles and creating individual details that are attached to the surface. "You create the parts and then stick them on like you were dealing with a kit model, but it's just on a computer screen and controlled with a mouse," said Perenteau.

The surface plating and color was created by scanning high resolution still photos of the *Voyager* model's painted surface and then texture-mapping this information onto the wire-frame model. In all, Amblin Imaging's virtual *Voyager* consists of over 300,000 polygons, one of the most complicated polygonal objects ever built.

"That gives you a certain kind of look," Stipes said. "What we discovered is that the physical model has certain levels of what we call specularly—little reflections and things like that—that are kicking light. We missed that on the digital model so the guys at Amblin went back and painted in little areas and brought up highlights and put what they call a specularly map on it, and they kicked up the key light a little bit more. And low and behold I think it looks really good. I'm very pleased and enthused about the work they did."

The staff at Amblin Imaging have come so close to matching the STAR TREK look that some people close to the production find it hard to tell the difference between the motion-control model shots of *Voyager* created at Image G and a CGI shot. One sure-fire way to distinguish between the two is to look closely at the rear windows of the ship, between the nacelles. On the CGI ship, these windows are illuminated. On the model ship there was no room to install lights in these portals due to the limited space inside the model and the size of the motors used to attenuate the warp nacelles.

CGI has become such a useful tool in certain instances, that Santa Barbara Studios has created their own digital model of *Voyager* as well. Because Santa Barbara uses the spline-based Alias software and Amblin uses the polygon-based Lightwave, the data from one program couldn't be interpreted by the other. So once again the physical model was scanned, this time by Viewpoint of Orem, Utah using a computer-pen system touched to hundreds of points on the

Is it real, or is it CGI? The CGI *Voyager* is shown below. A motion-control composite filmed with the actual physical model is shown right.







Using tape and string to set up the grid work on the *Voyager* model in preparation for digital scanning. Santa Barbara Studios used the database to create a wire-frame model texture mapped with still photos.

ship's surface. The meticulous wire-frame model was then passed on to Santa Barbara Studios where the surface was texture-mapped with photos of the model. There was just one problem. "We found that every photograph had a certain distortion, because of the lenses, and didn't match the model," said Moore. "So they had a guy at Santa Barbara who takes each piece literally, panel by panel over the entire ship, and morphs it to fit. He worked on this thing for days. It looks great but it's a big job."

The second CGI ship will give the effects team added flexibility in their scheduling. "It's never a good idea to have the kind of schedule and the kind of volume we have and have only one vendor," said Stipes. "People seem to feel that *BABYLON 5* is the toaster or Lightwave look and that's not the case. CGI basically is just another tool. It depends on the sensibility of the people involved. That's one of the things that's important about the crew we have on *TREK* and *DS9*. We are aware of the slightly different look for *DS9* than for *VOYAGER* which is different from the look of *TNG*. Those are pretty deliberate looks. On *DS9* their shadows are a little darker and their colors are less chromatic. We are doing more back lighting—also a very strong feature on *DS9*. I think it helps make the ship look more dramatic. There was this wonderful film, *A NIGHT TO REMEMBER* about

You can always tell the CGI ship from the rear because its rear windows are lit. There wasn't room in the model for the wiring in the back.



the *Titanic* sinking and I have this archetypal memory of the ship silhouetted against the sky and the lights blazing. That's the look I go for with *VOYAGER*—this long ship silhouetted against the darkness."

The hall of mirrors seen in "The Phage" proved to be a challenge requiring the ingenuity and computer-power of Amblin Imaging. Amblin not only used the digital model of *Voyager*, but created the mirrored surface of the asteroid interior. By doing so, each mirrored surface was an accurate reflection of the virtual *Voyager* ship. Trying to accomplish such an effect through conventional model photography would have taken weeks and required a mathematical genius to plot each angle of reflection.

"We basically built the entire scene with CGI," Bauer said. "John Gross and I sat for hours and days and just played with different sizes of mirrors and *Voyagers* and the position of the camera until we got the kinds of reflections and sizes of ships and recurring reflections going back in all directions. If our ship moved, all the reflections moved. They are all genuine reflections. The great thing about CGI is the camera and lights are invisible. In most cases the camera was actually between the ship and the mirrors, but since the camera is invisible you just see the ship."

Curry and Bauer were not completely satisfied, however, with the "real" digital *Voyager* in the foreground, and photographed the *Voyager* model to be composited over it. The web of reflected phasers was also a combination of digital techniques. A phaser "tube" was created within the CGI asteroid interior, and programmed to properly reflect off each mirrored surface. The foreground bolts, which Bauer added later to help sell the shot, were created with the more traditional use of Harry computer animation.

Ron Moore, on his first episode after the pilot, "The Cloud," was also faced with the challenge of creating a CGI environment. Searching for a new energy source, the *Voy-*

continued on page 125

up floating in space (reminiscent of the classic *SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE* *STAR TREK* skit), the crew follows its trail to a planet where atmospheric disturbances force the crew to land the ship. There they discover Amelia Earhart (Sharon Lawrence) frozen in suspended animation and an entire civilization of earthlings who are descended from 300 men and women kidnapped by aliens in 1937. These strangely dressed folks invite *Voyager's* crew to join them and Janeway fears the loss of her best people as she allows each crew member to decide whether to stay on this planet or continue home.

Many disparate story elements and ideas are shoe-horned into "The '37s" and nothing flows logically from point to point. The initial need to land the ship is a convenient invention of the writers, but allows for an impressive effects sequence. Landing also provides for the shock of seeing blue sky outside the conference room windows, and adds a new alert level, "blue," to *TREK* lore.

The introduction of Amelia Earhart, however, serves no real dramatic purpose. Sharon Lawrence wears the costume nicely, but has little else to do (and virtually nothing in the latter acts). Janeway could have discovered Albert Einstein in that giant test tube and it would have had no discernible impact on the story. The fact that Janeway is a fan of Earhart is not capitalized on as was, for instance, Kirk's affection for Abraham Lincoln in "The Savage Curtain."

The inevitable story in which part of the crew is tempted to remain behind also deserved better treatment in an episode not already crowded with human alien abductees, Amelia Earhart, and a landing sequence. It comes on suddenly and is not fully explored. At the very least they could have shown us a matte painting of these beautiful, tempting cities Janeway speaks of. The big moment where Janeway finds no one is defecting comes across as a bit of a cliché. What a difference it would have been if she found half her senior staff there!



The *Voyager* lands in "The '37s," the show designed to be the first season's finale, but aired by UPN as the premiere of season two.

"The '37s" was intended to mark a new direction for *Voyager*, the resolution of Maquis/Starfleet friction and the bonding of the crew as one. "This is the episode we designed to be the final show of the season," said Braga. "We were interested in having the crew show a little solidarity and standing together saying, 'We will make the best of this situation.' There's nothing worse than tuning in to a TV show where everyone hates to be where they are—unless it's a comedy. I would like to see people whining less about home. Enough already. It's going to start getting tiresome. We're going to focus more on exploration. That will be the over-riding concern. We are always looking for ways to fulfill the promise of this mysterious and dangerous quadrant of space. If there is one complaint I have about the first season, it is that there wasn't enough different about this quadrant. The aliens we met were painfully reminiscent of earlier shows. Our imagination fell a little short of what we're capable of doing." □

# STAR TREK VOYAGER

## EFFECTS PROCESS

*Effectsmen Phil Barberio and Joe Bauer on visualizing "Parallax."*

*By Dale Kutzera*

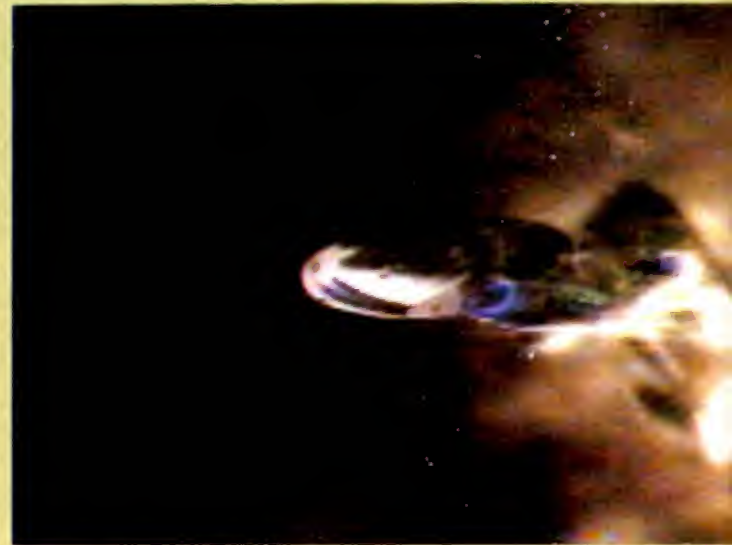
According to effects supervisor Phil Barberio, the effects design process typically begins with a preliminary copy of the script. "We usually get a white preliminary script and then add revisions on colored pages to it. Then a final script and again colored revision pages on it. It's a continuing process. So we get our script and a shooting schedule on what is going to happen on each day and we come up with a breakdown of visual effects of each scene. Some of the effects supervisors will do this by themselves, some will do this in collaboration with their coordinator. I worked closely with my coordinator, Joe Bauer. Joe and I will often sit down and brainstorm a show out—trying to figure out what it would take to do it. Then there is a budget breakdown. Every scene is budgeted for motion control, blue-screen composition, or how much animation is going to be needed."

One of Barberio's episodes, "Parallax," featured a completely new effect of the event horizon of a collapsed star. The effect was to be a mixture of specially photographed elements and images from STAR TREK's extensive library of stock elements. Located just outside effects supremo Dan Curry's office are a shelf full of three ring binders, known as DREs (Dan and Ron's Elements) each bulging with descrip-

tions and Polaroid stills of elements used over the combined ten years of TNG and DS9. Here you will find the nitrogen smoke, water effects, and sparkles efficiently cataloged and ready to be turned into nebulas, planets, stars, and the ever-popular space anomalies. The event horizon in "Parallax" married cloud elements with silver cloth seen through ripple glass, and liquid nitrogen filmed on the motion control stage.

"If we have something in particular we want to do, we go to Image G and we book an elements day," said Barberio. "We get a camera and a couple stage hands, a bottle of liquid nitrogen, a bag of glitter, or water and vibrating machines, and we try whatever we need that will create the effect. I actually had some money for that show to develop a whole effect so I played with stuff from our elements books and put this effect together with a cloud element made from liquid nitrogen, put into a Sony System G, then colored and wrapped in clouds."

The effects are reviewed by producer Peter Lauritson at various stages. "That's the only way you can protect yourself from getting off on a wrong track," said Barberio. "You've read the script and have an idea of what you're after, but usually there's not a lot of help from the writers. They write there's a black hole out there, or there's a tear in the event horizon. Okay, what does that look like? In 'Parallax,' I was drawing



The *Voyager* escapes a tear in the event horizon in "Parallax," filming acetone dripping onto styrofoam and backlit with added stock footage.

a blank on the tear. I asked them about it and they said, 'You know, a tear you can see space through.'"

The tear in this particular space hazard proved to be the most difficult element to realize. Fortunately, Dan Curry had devised a rather ingenious tearing effect using acetone dripped onto Styrofoam. As the foam was eaten away, a light on the other side shined through for a very organic looking effect. "We used that image to start with and then we created this background that was moving in four directions at the same time very slowly behind the hole so it gave it the look that it was being pulled toward the hole," said Barberio. "Then we darkened that and reddened it. The first hole was roundly rejected, because it was too big and looked like the ship could sail through easily. They wanted it to be gummy, where the *Voyager* could barely squeeze through, so we made it smaller and added more veins originally used on the goo monster from the pilot. They had some tests that weren't used and we put those into the opening as strands that would attach themselves to the ship as it goes through. As

For the climax of "Parallax," as Janeway and Torres return to the ship via shuttle, Bauer fashioned a low-budget docking bay model out of cardboard.



**“Usually there’s not a lot of help from the writers. They write there’s a tear in the event horizon, but what does it look like?”**

**—Phil Barberio, Effects—**

it punches through you see some residual stuff on the engine. Nothing’s ever thrown away.”

The climax of the episode has Janeway and Torres forced to decide between two *Voyager* ships, one real, and the other a reflection in the event horizon. To create the effect of the two landing their shuttle in the *Voyager*’s bay, Joe Bauer created a low-budget bay model and married it to the actual *Voyager* model. “There you have another situation of sizing because the *Voyager* model is five feet and the shuttle model is a foot and half to two feet, but if it were in scale it would be about an inch. The shuttle bay doesn’t exist as a full set or even as a nice model so it was a matter of scrounging through some throw-away DS9 models from last year and I ended up rebuilding in cardboard a docking bay. We ended up doing a move going back into the *Voyager* and then did a match move, scaled to size, of the inside bay and then just composited it. Thank God it all lined up. This was something Amblin was approached to build, but it became expensive and we needed it quickly, so in this case it was faster to build a physical model.”

The reverse shot had Janeway and Torres seen through the shuttle windshield, complete with a reflection of the of the approaching docking bay. “We flopped it for that shot, defocused it, then used a device called a System G that can warp a piece of video and just warped it around the edges so it looked like it was defining a bent piece of plexi-glass. Then at the point in the POV shot where they are going in the door we raised the light level inside, just the kind of detail that tries to sell the shot.”

Bauer’s penchant for finding budget-saving effects solutions also came to the aid of filming the effects intensive episode “The Phage.” In it, a race of disease plagued aliens steal Neelix’s lungs, climaxing in a showdown between their ship and the *Voyager* inside an asteroid hall of mirrors. The asteroid, a six-foot painted hunk of acetone-etched Styrofoam, was created for last season’s TNG episode “The Pegasus.” Bauer, who was coordinator on that show, simply used a different side of the asteroid model. Look closely and you can even see some stock effects footage used in “Pegasus” in this episode. □

had to be right. It’s a great idea having a woman captain, but if she’s not the right woman then we are dead in the water. And, of course, there are a limited number of scenes in the script so we heard the same scenes over and over, thousands of times. I’m not sure how you keep your critical faculties honed, but we did. We had some people that we were relatively happy with early on. They were not people that the studio executives felt were just right. One young woman they felt was too young. She is a very strong actress, but in retrospect now that we have Kate [Mulgrew]—who in my mind is perfect—I can look back and say, of course, she is too young. It’s so subjective. You put eight people in a room and you get eight different responses to them.

“It has been widely reported that we were in conflict with the studio over a female versus male captain. That is not so and I can’t go on record enough times to squelch that. They never said we don’t want a woman, they just said it had to be the right woman and only asked that if it looked like we weren’t finding the right woman would we then consider reading men? And when it looked like we weren’t finding the woman, we did read some men. Not very many, as it turned out.”

Each character presented its own casting problems (see sidebar articles). For Chakotay and Tuvok (originally envisioned as an older man) the difficulty was the small talent pool of Native American and older African-American actors. For B’Elanna Torres it was finding the right mix of Klingon spitfire and human sensuality. For Doc (known as Doc Zimmerman in the bible and pilot script) it was simply a lack of lines to audition with. “The doctor probably gave us more trouble than anyone but Janeway,” said Taylor. “The doctor has about 30 seconds of screen time in the pilot so there was not a lot for an actor to grab on to. It was a very daunting challenge for an actor to create a character with very few lines.”

#### A FALSE START

Try as they might, the producers still couldn’t find their woman captain. Production on the pilot, scheduled to begin in mid-August was pushed back one week, then two, then three. Finally, they received word that Genevieve Bujold (COMA, EARTHQUAKE), was interested. There was one catch: the Oscar-nominated actress (for ANNE OF THE THOUSAND DAYS) would not audition. Faced with the possibilities of having a famous, accomplished feature film actress in command, the producers gave her the job and on September 1, a press release was issued announcing the new VOYAGER cast, including Bujold as Capt. Elizabeth Janeway. A week later, however, on September 9, a terse statement was issued by the producers:

*“Genevieve Bujold has resigned her role in STAR TREK: VOYAGER. After several*



Doc finds himself reliving the *Beowulf* saga in “Heroes & Demons,” the terrific first season show written by TNG alumnus Naren Shankar.

*days of production, she realized that the rigors of episodic television were too demanding. We will remain in production while continuing our search for the best possible captain, and fully expect to meet our January 1995 launch date.”*

The producers quickly recovered, however, and by September 16, Kate Mulgrew was cast as the renamed Kathryn Janeway (for the complete story on what Jeri Taylor refers to as the “great Genevieve Bujold incident” see article on page 39). With long hours of hard work, the shooting of the pilot went forward. The delays and false start, if anything, bonded the cast and production crew together. When they weren’t shooting, the new TREK stars, particularly Mulgrew, were participating in photo shoots, conducting interviews, and feeding the publicity machine. The anticipation of VOYAGER, along with the release of the feature film STAR TREK: GENERATIONS, created an enormous wave of TREK publicity, including the covers of *TV Guide*, *Entertainment Weekly*, and *Time*. The wave crashed to shore on January 16th, two days before the UPN network premiere of VOYAGER, when the pilot was screened for cast and crew on the Paramount lot.

#### PURE LUCK

According to Nielsen Media Research, the two-hour premiere of STAR TREK: VOYAGER earned a 13 rating and a 19 share, making it the 22nd-ranked TV program for the week of Jan. 16-22 (between FRASIER on NBC and THE NANNY on CBS). Each rating point equals one percent of the estimated 95.4 million TV homes in the U.S. Each audience share point equals



Second season's opener "The 37's," as a Japanese soldier (James Saito) and Amelia Earhart (Sharon Lawrence) awaken after being frozen for 400 years.

one percent of the TV sets turned on during the same time slot. Fan reaction was overwhelmingly positive, with the only frequent quibbles being Kate Mulgrew's Hepburn-esque voice (one Internet wit compared her to Jane Curtin's Primat Conehead).

The pilot was followed by "Parallax," "Time and Again," and "Phage," each presenting a strong high-concept sci-fi adventure while never failing to take the appropriate moments to get to know the characters. Unlike DS9, which often interweaves two disparate storylines, in VOYAGER the A and B stories grow one from the other. "I've always felt the best storytelling on TNG and on VOYAGER are stories that may have an A-and-B plot, but the A-and-B plots are integrally connected, as in 'Parallax,' or at least thematically connected," said Braga.

At the center is Janeway, a rock of stability, yet at times uncertain, vulnerable, human. Barely an episode went by without a "Janeway moment," whether it be chewing out the pathetic Phage, venting at Tuvok's inexplicable mutinous behavior, or encouraging the young Harry Kim to take it slow and smell the roses.

It's hard to imagine Jean Luc Picard, distainer of children, delivering those kinds of lines. Clearly the months of thought and deliberation that have gone into VOYAGER have paid off. Even Jeri Taylor admitted, however, that despite all of their effort and trauma and delays, luck has also played a role. "Even very accomplished casts and actors need a period of adjustment," she said. "They find their characters over a season or two and then they get to know each other and they bond as an ensemble. [The VOYAGER cast] stepped right into these characters. It felt as though they have worked together for a couple of years and nobody can make that happen. You couldn't do it if you tried." □

**VOYAGER MAKEUP**  
SEE PAGE 86

# STAR TREK VOYAGER

## EMANATIONS

*Effects supervisor David Stipes on using the new CGI capabilities.*

*By Dale Kutzera*

There is no finer example of the newfound impact of CGI effects on STAR TREK than the asteroid sequence from the episode "Emanations." This series of shots, designed by David Stipes and executed by Amblin Imaging, represents the new level of creativity CGI allows. Ironically, the writer-producers of the series completely wrote around the asteroid sequence, anticipating that it would be unfilmable.

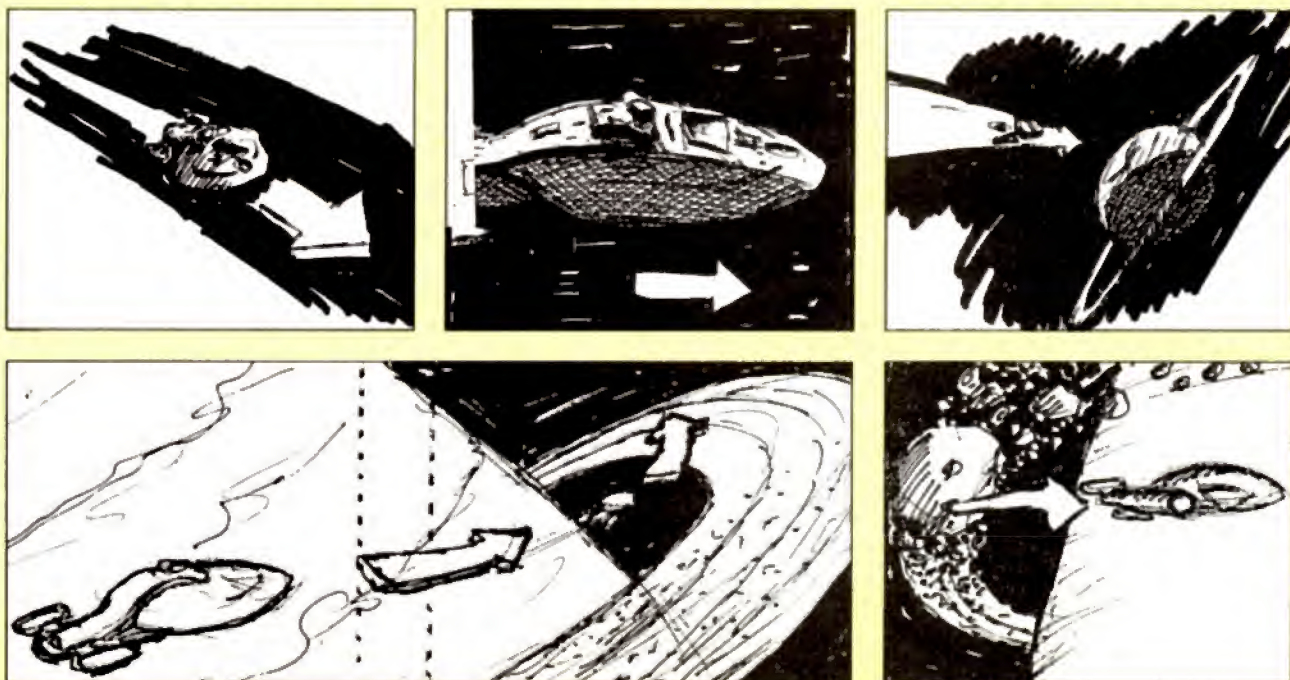
"We were initially going to see a ring at a distance, so it looks like a Saturn-like planet, then we were going to go into a graphic that shows the asteroids, and then we were going to talk about them. We were not going to see them. That was to cut the budget," said Stipes. "The producers were absolutely right that under a conventional approach we could not have done this show. Those kind of shots tend to be very expensive. You have so many different components to layer in together—all these asteroids, the planet, and the ship—that it just becomes a lot more involved than just a ship

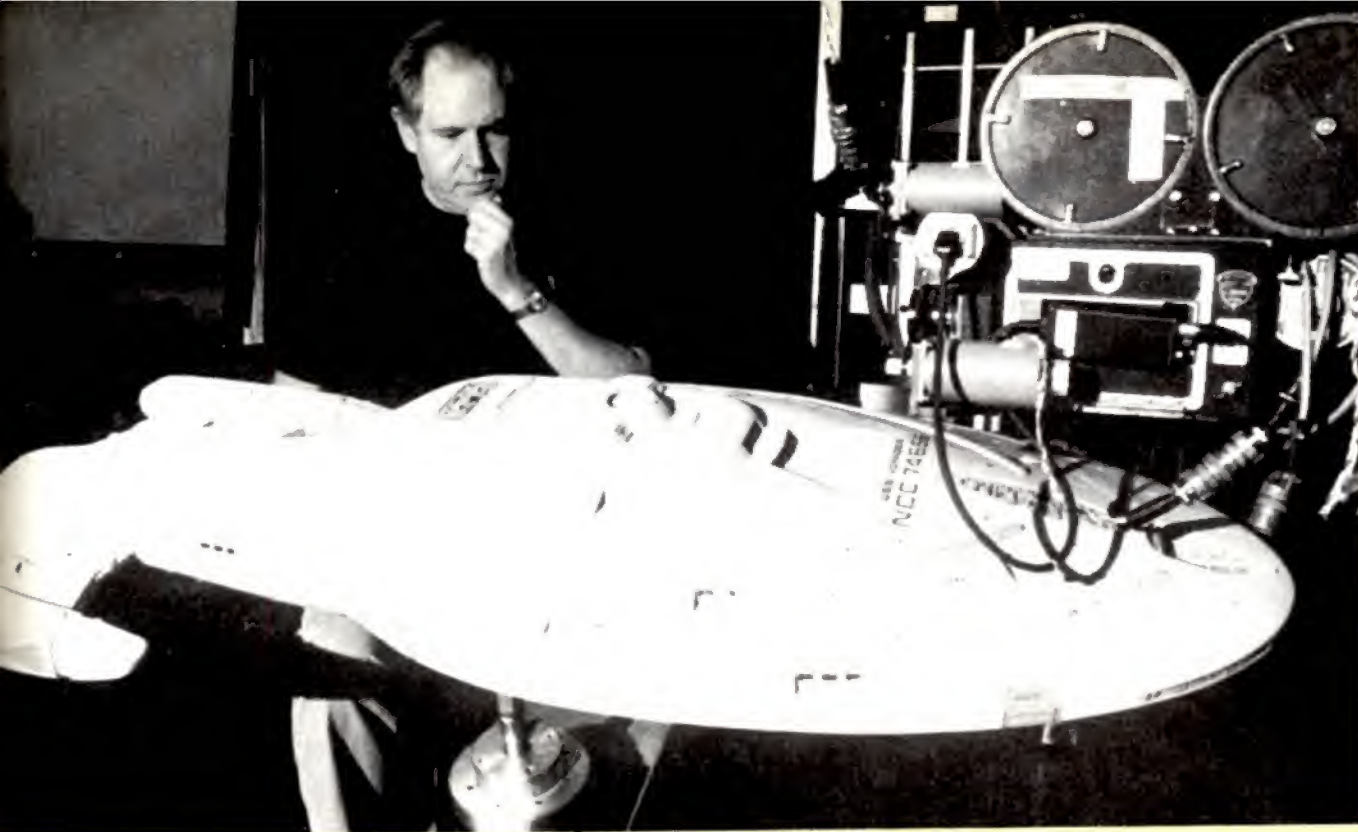
over stars. But I got very excited about this particular script. I liked the idea of the after-life, of going on to a different lifetime, and was very intrigued by the impact that Harry Kim was having on the other race: he has totally blown away their concept of what their afterlife is about. It was wonderful and I really pushed to make this stuff happen."

Stipes met with the Amblin staff and explained his hope of achieving an epic vision on a modest budget. With the CGI *Voyager* already constructed, the shots were in the realm of possibility. Stipes then presented his case to the producers. "I'm saying, 'Guys we've got to see this.' I brought in storyboards to show them. I talked with David Livingston who was the director and he was very supportive, talked with Jeri Taylor and she said, 'If you can do it for the budget we have, then fine let's do it.' And Peter Lauritson was tremendously supportive and made some suggestions on how to rearrange some of the shots."

The most impressive shot of the sequence follows the *Voyager* from a stationery position in front of the asteroids

To convince producers to use CGI for the episode's asteroid sequence, Stipes designed this storyboard sequence and lobbied to make it work. The script skirted the issue as beyond the show's budget.





Stipes contemplates a motion-control move on the *Voyager* model at Image G. Stipes had planned to film the model for "Emanations," but Amblin Imaging used a CGI ship to demonstrate its capabilities.

through a 180 degree pan to where the ship stretches into warp drive. Created entirely by Amblin Imaging with the Lightwave modeling program, the shot drew upon the creative talents of the entire Amblin staff. "One thing on 'Emanations' we are particularly proud of is that everybody was involved," said Grant Bouchet, who along with John Gross supervises Amblin's animation for VOYAGER. "All of us finessed motion, lighting, texture maps, planets. We all had a hand in every single shot."

Building the different elements in the shot began simply enough by using a standard sphere that is a pre-existing part of the Lightwave software. To add surface detail, a satellite photo of Nevada was scanned, manipulated through the image processing program Adobe Photo Shop, then wrapped around the sphere. "One of our animators, David Jones, worked full time on getting that planet to look like David Stipes wanted it to look," said John Gross.

With the planet surface complete, two additional spheres were created around it to simulate the atmosphere and cloud layers. An even larger, Star-fader sphere is included on most planets for STAR TREK, to fade the star background into darkness just above the planet surface. The stars themselves were created by John Gross for the STAR TREK: GENERATIONS film trailer, using a variety of light points set at different distances within an extremely large sphere. The distant Saturnian rings were a matte painted by David Jones. "As we get closer and closer the rings are created using a particle system in Lightwave," said Gross. "We apply a bump map to it to make it bumpy. Closer still we break off into the big chunks."

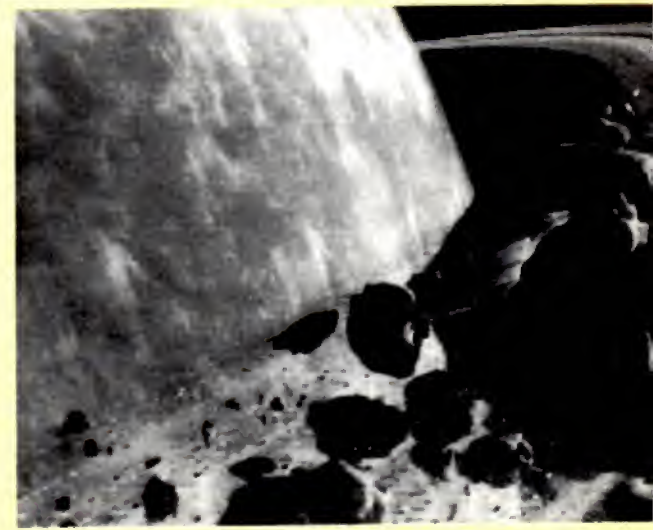
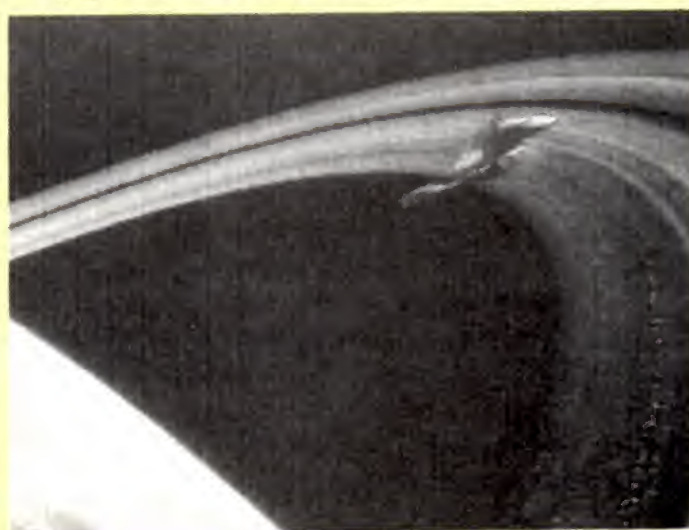
"At this point it was handed to me for throwing in the asteroids," said Bouchet. "In the distance we had a layer of very fine transparent particles, then the layer closer to us of a whole bunch of little bitty distorted spheres, thousands of them. These are not

very complicated whatsoever, but when the light hits them you get these little highlights. Again the computer is doing all that work for you. The next layer up are medium size asteroids and they have a low level of detail. David hand-painted a matte of a rocky, bumpy surface. Then we used Lightwave's spherical mapping algorithm to apply that around the asteroids."

With the background complete, the Amblin team ventured into a bit of subtle salesmanship by inserting their CGI *Voyager* into the scene. Originally Stipes had planned to matte footage of the actual model, but after seeing the CGI ship, saw no reason to shoot motion control footage. The final movement was programmed by John Gross and all that remained was the critical task of finessing the shot. "My experience so far is that CGI takes a little time," said Stipes. "You can knock off moves, but to really get the look—the art direction—I consider that to be the big challenge."

Lighting was attempted from two different directions. The first backlit the ship, giving a raw, moody feel to the beginning of the shot, but losing that effect by the end of the pan. The second front lit the *Voyager*, giving it a beautiful painted look at the be-

Amblin Imaging's CGI effects for "Emanations." In the original script the asteroids were never seen, only talked about. Noted Stipes, "This show would not have been possible to do just one year ago."



**“Dan Curry and Santa Barbara Studios held out a promise for the show with their title sequence. I tried to adhere to that mood.”**

**—David Stipes, Effects—**

ginning of the shot, but rendering it almost totally black by the end. Stipes ultimately chose the backlit ship. "Then it was a matter of fine-tuning lighting," said Bouchet. "Each element is lit from about the same direction, but at just a little different angle, maybe five degrees here or there."

The final stretch to warp speed has been refined a bit since the pilot. Where the tail end of the ship once remained stationary as the front stretched forward, now it moves slightly forward before snapping ahead. Looking back, Stipes considers the episode the high point of the season, and something of a high water mark for TREK effects.

"I think Dan Curry and the guys at Santa Barbara Studios held out a promise for the show in the title sequence," he said. "I try to adhere to the mood it established. The title sequence was part of the inspiration and the thrust for the 'Emanations' show—the scale of the planet, the planetoids, the asteroids, and the rings, all of those things. I try to challenge myself. I'm not in competition with Ron [Moore], or Glenn [Nuefeld], or Gary [Hutzel]. I'm in competition with myself. What can I do to make these shows more exciting?"

"Here was this wonderful concept, a tremendously great script, and we were able to reflect what was in the script by bringing some of that flavor to the show visually. Because of the foresight of the producers having created a CGI ship, we were able to come in and deliver shots that up to now we couldn't have afforded to do. I'm not sure people at Paramount realize it, but this show would not have been possible a year ago." □

# STAR TREK VOYAGER

## CHARACTER MAKEUPS

*Emmy winner Michael Westmore on supervising the makeup design of the show's alien cast.*

*By Dale Kutzera*

Pointed ears, false teeth, fake foreheads, festering boils—just another day at the office for Michael Westmore, STAR TREK's award-winning makeup supervisor. Overseeing a regular staff of ten (which could swell to 50 or more depending on how many Cardassian or Kazon extras a script calls for), Westmore is responsible for the various makeup challenges presented by both VOYAGER and DEEP SPACE NINE. "With two shows happening it's always a busy time on both sides of the street," said Westmore. "I have very good quality help so there hasn't been anything put to us that we haven't been able to get done on time."

This 1994-95 season presented a host of new challenges to Westmore and his staff, most revolving around the new makeup demands for STAR TREK: VOYAGER. The series required no fewer than six alien makeups for regular cast members, three of which are from races we have never seen before. Westmore's planning began before the script was finished, long before casting had been completed. Reading the series bible and pilot story, he familiarized himself with the kinds of characters the producers were creating.

Noted Westmore, "They called for B'Elanna Torres being a half Klingon, for Kes being more or less an impish kind of alien who is going to fall in love with a total type of alien—like a Ferengi or something on that nature of makeup intensity. I'll write all those things down as I'm reading the script. The different actions and reactions that an alien character will go through will dictate to me what I want to pull out of a character, because you almost have to telescope it to the audience, to let them know by the look



Westmore, who won an Emmy for his work on last season's DEEP SPACE NINE, in his Paramount workshop with the head of Data he made for TNG.

of the character whether he is going to bite you or not. Like cartooning, you always get the feel for the character even if they are not saying anything."

Of course, at some point an actor will bring these characters to life and Westmore's makeup must accommodate that. The one drawback of the unrelenting pace of television series production is that there is little time for testing or refining a design. Often an alien makeup is designed and produced even before the actor who will wear it is cast. "Recently the producers told us they were going to hire a big person and they were so late in casting that I had to go ahead and start designing it on another large head. But it was designed in three different pieces and they could overlap or expand them. If the script calls for a six-foot-four person and they hire a four-foot nine person you've got to be ready to adjust."

### VOYAGER'S ALIENS

For VOYAGER, with casting dragging on longer than expected, Westmore began

work on various aliens without the actors. "We had to get right in and sculpt something and get the approval on it," said Westmore. "Like B'Elanna's forehead; we didn't do three and four heads to see which the producers liked. We sculpted one up, they liked it, we put it into rubber, and she was wearing it. We had a little more time on Kes' ears. The ears were actually a little longer than they are now and we shortened them up."

Among the other practical considerations Westmore must keep in mind is the time a given makeup takes to put on and take off. This plays an important role in the hours an actors can work.

Even then as a show settles into a long run, and each makeup artist becomes more familiar with the tricks and short cuts of the characters they're assigned, the application time for a makeup can decrease substantially. For example, the Klingon makeup for Michael Dorn's Worf once took two and a half hours to apply, but by the end of the series the makeup artists had it down to only 90 minutes.

For other makeups there are no short cuts, as with Chakotay's abstract facial tattoo, which Westmore paints on Robert Beltran every morning with a number three watercolor brush. "[The producers] were not going to put feathers in his hair," he said. "But they wanted something for him that would make him distinctive and came up with the idea of a tattoo. I did a lot of research on Indian tattoos all over the world and it's a combination of lots of things. You can't say it is Filipino or Malaysian or American, it was just groups of swirls. I tried doing his whole face, then half his face, and then different areas of the face. Rick Berman and the powers that be at the



**“Neelix had to be likeable. We gave him round features, not strong menacing ones, and soft, amber-orange hand-painted lenses.”**

**—Michael Westmore, Makeup—**

Ethan Phillips as Neelix (l), Roxann Biggs-Dawson as Torres (top) and Tim Russ as Tuvok. Westmore had to begin designing and sculpting before the roles were even cast, and had no time for testing.

studio decided that the most attractive thing would be just the upper quarter face.”

### A BLACK VULCAN

When the producers first told Westmore they were planning to cast an African-American as a Vulcan, his first thought was how he would paint the man yellow. After all, Vulcans had always been “Leonard Nimoy #1 yellow.” The plans for Tuvok, however, involved broadening the Vulcan lore to include a full range of skin tones, just as TNG’s Worf had broadened the Klingon race. Westmore’s first chance to experiment for an African-American Vulcan happened during the last season of TNG when, among other things, a dark-complected man was cast as a Romulan in “The Pegasus.” “We wanted to test it and see what it will look like to match their skin tones. Basically, we make the lighter skin tones on the yellow side, but for people in the hotter hemisphere where the skin tones are darker we match the person’s color. Instead of trying to make him darker or lighter you put the ears on him and match the ears up to their natural skin tone. It’s great, because you don’t have to worry about hand makeup or lots of face makeup.”

Tim Russ further refined his Vulcan appearance by shaving the hair at his temples and the crest of his forehead. Combined with false side-burns, the effect is a straight, rounded hairline. One thing that hasn’t changed is the age-old production of Vulcan ears. The process of taking a mold of Russ’ ears, sculpting the pointed tip, and casting it

in foam latex has changed surprisingly little from what was done for Leonard Nimoy 30 years ago.

A similar technique is used to create B’Elanna Torres’ Klingon forehead. As a half-human, half-Klingon, Torres would not have the stern full Klingon makeup. Instead, Roxann Biggs-Dawson’s beautiful face would be allowed to shine through, unhindered by contact lenses and cumbersome Klingon teeth. “She is half Klingon and more to the human side than Klingon side,” said Westmore. “The character dictated that she have a soft look. She has very fine-pored skin so you can’t stick a head on her that has lots of wrinkling in it and lots of heavy bumps. It also meant putting something on her that she’s still going to look attractive with.”

### NEELIX

By far the most challenging of the new cast was Neelix. Intended to have a makeup of the complexity of DS9’s Quark, Westmore wanted to create something more gentle and humorous as opposed to Quark’s pointy-toothed fierceness. “He had to have a nice look. He had to be likable and so you wouldn’t do anything frightening on him, like turned-down lines on his face. Conversely, you want things more or less going up with him so he’s happy with a kind of jovial look all the time. You could make him into a doll and a kid would take him to bed just like a teddy bear. With that in mind, I made him as peaceful and gentle as I

could. His little eyebrows dangle out over his face and he’s got little tufts of hair on his cheeks like an Englishman. Instead of trying to give him a whole head of hair, which would make him look very human, we gave him a very bristly mohawk that actually falls down his back behind his costume. Then we gave him round features as opposed to strong menacing ones, and his eyeballs are not red or intense, but are very soft, amber-orange hand-painted contact lenses. He’s also wearing teeth that are very small little nubs instead of something sharp, the idea behind that he is probably a vegetarian.”

Westmore presented several sketches and clay models to the producers for approval. The only significant changes were in the ears, which he had originally designed to dangle from the head and wobble with any movement. The makeup consists of a full head, separate ears, a wrap in the front of the face that includes the nose and cheeks, and then small blending pieces on each side of the neck. These parts are painted with a spotted pattern of warm colors such as yellow, peach and brown. The entire process takes about two and a half hours. “The makeup artist in charge of [Neelix] is Scott Wheeler and Scott paints those little dots every morning with his airbrush,” said Westmore. “Scott hand paints the whole head before he puts it on which saves the actor a tremendous amount of time. We change the face every day, but the head is used maybe four times, otherwise you’d be painting dots the rest of your life.”

### THE PHAGE

Recurring characters that Westmore is quite proud of are the alien victims of the Phage, a horrific plague that eats away at its victims, forcing them to scavenge living organs and tissues in order to survive. As seen in episodes “Phage” and “Faces” these pitiful beings resemble a patch-work quilt of alien skins. Oddly enough, the makeup appliance consists of one mask that covers the entire head. The different skin textures were sculpted on the same piece, and then painted a variety of colors. “It was all sculpted into one piece with different textures so it looked like overlapping chunks of stuff. They also wear dentures and contact lenses.” □

# STAR TREK

## DEEP SPACE NINE

**It's the only game in the Alpha Quadrant and fans are beginning to take notice.**

By Dale Kutzera

Third season was to be the year. The year DEEP SPACE NINE leapt out from the shadow of THE NEXT GENERATION. The year DS9 became STAR TREK's first-run elder statesmen—no more ship-show versus station-show debates, no more playing second fiddle. The Fall of 1994, during the brief but critical gap between the end of NEXT GENERATION and the beginning of STAR TREK: VOYAGER, was to be DS9's moment in the sun.

But it just didn't work out that way.

"It was great having meetings with Paramount and everyone talking about how DEEP SPACE NINE would fill this vacuum," said executive producer Ira Behr. "We were skeptical. We knew UPN and VOYAGER were going to be intense, and I knew we'd be lost in the shuffle again. The only difference was in doing talks at conventions. I really felt a difference in the crowd. It wasn't, 'We're really interested in TNG, but we'll talk about DEEP SPACE NINE.' That feeling was gone. The questions were about DEEP SPACE NINE and TNG."

Noted DS9's executive producer and co-creator Michael Piller, "What you're dealing with in DEEP SPACE NINE is sort of a middle-child syndrome. NEXT GENERATION was 'the show,' and then there was DEEP SPACE NINE. Suddenly, VOYAGER is 'the show'; and then there is DEEP SPACE NINE. So, the eldest child gets all of the attention, and the baby gets all of the attention, and the middle child has to fend for itself. But fending for itself has been a very healthy quality in terms of creative development. DEEP SPACE NINE, while it may not have the hard ratings num-



Avery Brooks as Commander Sisko, now bearded and at the helm of the *Defiant*, a fighting ship to rival *Voyager* or the *Enterprise*, continuing the changes made third season.

bers that NEXT GENERATION had or that VOYAGER has—it's hard to say when you have a new show what the real, true rating levels will turn out to be—from a creative standpoint, I can tell you that the studio, Rick [Berman] and I, and Ira are extraordinarily proud of the standard of storytelling that we have put on week after week. We've done a very, very good series for three years."

DEEP SPACE NINE was buried in an avalanche of publicity for the STAR TREK: GENERATIONS feature film and the media

blitz of STAR TREK: VOYAGER, the only show to make the cover of *TV Guide* months before it had even premiered on the new United Paramount Network. Once again, DS9 played bridesmaid, offering its own unique and varied mix of stories that continue to challenge the traditional boundaries of the STAR TREK universe. And to perhaps turn the tables on VOYAGER and extend its ratings supremacy, DS9 has added TNG star Michael Dorn to its mix fourth season.

"We are nothing if we're not inconsistent. Consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds," enthused Behr, clearly having the time of his life creating and exploring his own edgy corner of the galaxy. "We have the freedom to do whatever we want and it's like a drug—a creative drug—just to take those chances. Playing it safe on a show like DEEP SPACE NINE would be a crime. The season is an amazing collage of different types of tales. But there's a through line. Certainly the one thing we're not inconsistent on is character. We learned more about these characters in the third season than you did in the original series in three years. The third season was, for the most part, a calm business-as-usual type of season. We had a pretty calm time even with the changes we went through."

And there were plenty of changes. In front of the camera, DS9 unveiled new sets, fine-tuned characters, long-term plot complications, and the *Defiant*, the baddest battle ship ever to cruise out of the Utopia Planitia ship-yards. Behind the camera, the show welcomed on board new writer/producers and saw the gradual departure of its co-creator and executive producer, Michael Piller.

### NEW BLOOD

When Peter Allen Fields and David



**“We have the freedom to do whatever we want. It’s like a creative drug to take those chances. Playing it safe on DS9 would be a crime.”**

**—Producer Ira Behr—**

Crocker left the series at the end of the second season, Behr didn’t have to look far to replace them. It just so happened that elsewhere in the Hart Building, a pair of solid STAR TREK writers were about to enter the ranks of the unemployed. THE NEXT GENERATION’s Ron Moore was tapped to replace Fields as supervising producer.

“I had worked with Ron the third season of TNG,” said Behr. “We worked very closely back then and got along very well together. I had one conversation with Ron at the end of second season, before hiatus, and said we had an opening and he was out of work.”

Recalled Moore, now in his eighth year of involvement with STAR TREK, “Close to the end of the last season of TNG I had a conversation with Michael Piller about the next year and where people wanted to go. VOYAGER was still just coming into focus and he asked me about what I wanted to do. I had given some thought to DS9 and I was thinking about VOYAGER and he said I should talk to Ira. Ira and I had lunch and chatted it over. It was very interesting to hear his thoughts on the show and his perspective on what they were doing.

“He talked about the second season and what they’ve been trying to do and how the show was starting to shape up. It was becoming sort of a long saga and the fact that the station doesn’t go anywhere—which a lot of people saw as a negative—was starting to become a plus, because it allowed the stories to get richer as you saw plot lines develop over a long period of time. That was interesting and after that conversation I sat down and started watching the episodes which I hadn’t really kept up with, because I was so busy and I don’t watch a lot of TV. There were certain shows that really appealed to me like ‘Necessary Evil’ and ‘Crossover’ and the ‘Wire’ and ‘The Collaborator.’ I could start seeing shows that I would like to have written. These were interesting directions to go in and they were taking certain risks with the characters that I liked. Basically I was TNG’d out. I was doing the final season and then the movie and that was just enough with the bald guy and his friends, okay? And to me personally the idea of doing another starship show didn’t really have much appeal.

“DS9 appealed to me because it was different, it wasn’t what I had been doing for

**Refugees from THE NEXT GENERATION: Michael Dorn as Worf came aboard DS9 at the beginning of fourth season in “The Way of the Warrior.” Below: Jonathan Frakes abandons his role as Commander Riker to concentrate on directing, rehearsing Salome Jens in third season’s “The Search, Part II.”**

## THIRD SEASON GUIDE

### By Dale Kutzera

"Curson always thought you were the kind of man who had to be in the thick of things, not behind some desk at headquarters."

—Dax to Sisko

#### THE SEARCH, PART I

★★★

9/24/94. Episode: 47. Stardate: 48212.4. Teleplay by Ronald D. Moore. Story by Ira Steven Behr and Robert Hewitt Wolfe. Directed by Kim Friedman.

As the crew of DS9 prepares for an invasion by the Dominion through the wormhole, Commander Sisko introduces a new toy to the station and the series. The *Defiant*, a souped-up battleship originally designed to combat the Borg and equipped with a Romulan cloaking devise, will allow the crew to infiltrate the Gamma Quadrant, find the Founders, and negotiate with them. With a reluctant Quark and moody Odo along for the ride, the team finds a hidden communications relay station and discovers the location of the Founders. A surprise attack by the Jem'Hadar, however, forces all hands to abandon ship. Odo rescues an injured Kira and together they flee to the mysterious Omarion Nebula where they find a rogue planet that is Odo's long lost home world.

This follow-up to last season's cliffhanger, "Jem'Hadar," establishes a more action-oriented tone to DS9. The burly muscle-car, *Defiant*, provides a much-needed vehicle to take the cast into the Gamma Quadrant, and offers Avery Brooks' Sisko ample opportunity to strike heroic leadership poses on the bridge. There's plenty of character building moments for the Commander, including a kind of Sisko manifesto delivered by Dax, some great acting by Rene Auberjonois as Odo, and some fine special effects, including one of the more jarring battle sequences seen to date.

"I was surprised and pleased to write the first episode of the season," said supervising producer Ron Moore. "THE NEXT GENERATION was the only show I had ever written for and I hadn't written anything but TNG in quite some time, so I did approach it with a certain trepidation. Starting right off the bat with the first episode really made me put those fears aside and just do it. I was glad I could just jump in and start writing instead of worrying."

Much of the story for "The Search" was established at the end of the second season before Moore joined the series. It was up to him, however, to flesh out the backstory of the *Defiant* and its capabilities. "Our first name for the ship was the *Valiant* and the producers didn't like that name. With VOYAGER coming, I don't think they wanted another starship with a V-name. So I remembered *Defiant* from the old series. The thing with Odo as a founder was actually something they were planning for a third season cliffhanger but Michael said, 'Let's do this at the beginning, make it a two-parter, and we'll start off the season with a big bang.' We do a lot in this

Kira and Odo discover their comrades at the climax of "The Search, Part II," and find Odo's people are the Founders pulling the strings.



The crew explores the Gamma Quadrant beyond the wormhole and discovers the planet of the Vorta, Odo's people in "The Search, Part I."

opening two parter—a new ship, Odo's revelation, going to the Gamma Quadrant—so it became a really interesting task."

A few quibbles: Quark's presence on this critical away mission seems to have been included simply to give Armin Shimerman something to do in the season opener. Shimerman is energetic as always, but the lighthearted scenes between Quark and the persnickety alien trader Ornithar (John Fleck) dilute the tension of this life-or-death mission.

"I am home."

—Odo

#### THE SEARCH, PART II

★★1/2

10/01/94. Episode: 48. Stardate: not given. Teleplay by Ira Steven Behr. Story by Ira Steven Behr and Robert Hewitt Wolfe. Directed by Jonathan Frakes.

As Kira and Odo learn more about his home world and his fellow shapeshifters (including Salome Jens as their distaff leader), the rest of the DS9 crew, having abandoned the *Defiant*, are rescued and returned to DS9. There they find negotiations are underway between the Vorta, Borath, a smug member of the Founders (Dennis Christopher), and the equally smug Admiral Necheyev (Natalija Nogulich). Sisko suspects these negotiations are not in the best interests of the Federation and, in a desperate act certain to ruin their Starfleet careers, he and the crew take a runabout and collapse the wormhole. Meanwhile, back on that rogue planet, Kira and Odo discover a mysterious sealed door. Inside, they find their comrades, each unconscious as Borath implants the experiences we have witnessed into their heads. Surprise! Odo's race of changelings are the Founders.

"This is why I like the show—everything is subjective," said executive producer Ira Behr. "Where I get my jolt of adrenaline is where we were able to reverse the two-parter. Usually the small intimate story leads to big climax. We felt it would be interesting to do just the opposite—start with the big plot-driven show, really make that exciting and fun, and then surprise the audience with the character revelation."

"We were nervous at the time, because we were really gambling with the Jem'Hadar. We were saying this is going to become a big part of the show, and then putting it all on Odo seemed to be a delicate maneuver. There were people who said it's DALLAS, it's all a dream, but to us that wasn't the focus of what the story was about. Sometimes you take an incredible journey into the unknown and the results are very different than you think they're going to be. You're in there to face the enemy and in the end you have to face yourself. That's what we were trying to do."

This confusing resolution to Part I raises more questions than it answers. What happened to the *Defiant*, which was trashed in Part I? (Apparently that was part of the DALLAS-like dream.) What happened to Lt. Commander Michael Eddington (Kenneth Marshall), the new Starfleet security chief introduced in Part I? Why would the Founders, os-

tensibly a ruthless bunch, allow Odo and the crew to leave? What results from this two-part story, a treaty, a war, anything?

"I am Quark, son of Keldar, and I come to answer the challenge of Degor, son of... whatever."

—Quark

#### THE HOUSE OF QUARK

★★★

10/08/94. Production Number: 49. Stardate: not given. Teleplay by Ronald D. Moore. Story by Tom Benko. Directed by Les Landau.

When a drunken Klingon, Kozak (Joseph Ruskin), falls on his own knife, Quark, hoping to boost business, claims to have heroically killed the warrior in self-defense. His plan takes a turn for the worse when he is confronted by the dead Klingon's brother, D'Ghor (Carlos Carrasco), and then his widow, Grika (Mary Kay Adams). Quark finds himself in the center of a Klingon melodrama worthy of MELROSE PLACE as he is forced to marry into the Klingon family and defend the family honor against the scheming brother. Ron Moore, who made Klingon stories his specialty on TNG, takes obvious relish in poking fun at the warrior race.

"Working with the Klingons has given me a lot of enjoyment and I had found a lot to do with them," said Moore, "but at the same time, TNG tended to take itself so deadly seriously. These guys were ripe for a lot of fun and bringing Quark there and doing that particular storyline gave me a chance to do both. It could be a fun episode, but one that kept the Klingons true to who they were. I was glad to go to the Klingon home world for a change and do it with a different kind of take, instead of the *Sturm-und-Drang* that we usually do. I just love the image of them all trying to follow along on the little PADDs."

Where some Quark episodes lay the Ferengi schtick on a bit thick, "House of Quark" works as an affectionate send-up of all things Klingon, including a shot-gun marriage, an even funnier divorce, and Quark running accounting circles around the Klingon high council. This story is interwoven with a B-story of Chief O'Brien trying to cheer up his wife Keiko (Rosalind Chao) who is discouraged at the closing of the DS9 school. Reluctantly, O'Brien determines the only thing to satisfy her is to use her skills as a botanist on Bajor, something that will require a separation of several months.



Quark and Grika (Mary Kay Adams) in "The House of Quark," a Klingon melodrama worthy of MELROSE PLACE, played for laughs.

"Beets are a very misunderstood vegetable."

—Sisko

#### EQUILIBRIUM

★★

10/15/94. Episode: 50. Stardate: not given. Teleplay by Rene Echevarria. Story by Christopher Teague. Directed by Cliff Bole.

When Dax suffers from radical mood swings

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**“We can do episodes that are just comedies. We don’t have to put the stupid ship in jeopardy every week. DS9 is the best of both worlds.”**

**—Producer Ron Moore—**

five years, and I was looking to doing something different. On the other hand I still like the STAR TREK universe and I like telling stories within it. This is a rich place to do different kinds of writing. DS9 seemed to be the best of both worlds. It was still STAR TREK, but the difference between TNG and DS9 was profound. By the end of TNG you knew all you wanted to know—and probably more—about Worf’s family background or Picard’s brother. It went on and on. We had mined those characters pretty thoroughly whereas in DS9 at that point we didn’t even know where Odo came from so there was a lot of material still to be done.”

Convincing Rene Echevarria, TNG’s story editor, to sign on DS9 rather than the starship *Voyager* proved to be a more daunting task. “Rene was a freelancer on TNG’s third season when he did the Data’s daughter episode [‘The Offspring’],” said Behr. “We all knew each other—it’s all a little incestuous around here—and Michael Piller was interested in him coming on the show. He had to think that through. He was very loyal to Jeri and a little conflicted. But without a doubt he’s happy to be here. He’s very comfortable with the choice he made.”

In fact, Echevarria initially turned down the offer to join the DS9 staff in favor of being part of VOYAGER’s maiden cruise. After a series of meetings with Michael Piller and Rick Berman, he agreed to sign on DS9 with the option of shifting back to VOYAGER at the end of the season if he so desired. “Michael [Piller] didn’t give me a choice,” said Echevarria. “Michael asked me to come to DS9 as he felt it would be a good time for me to join the series in the third season when so much pipe had been laid. He was expecting it to be a really great season and he also felt I could learn a lot working with Ira. I had a series of meetings with Jeri about going to VOYAGER and after much discussion and talking to Ira I decided to do what Mike wanted me to do.

“It wasn’t that I didn’t

Producer Ron Moore chose to move over to DS9 after years as one of the top writers on TNG.



Tim Russ as Tuvok makes a brief cameo on “Through the Looking Glass,” as Sisko (Avery Brooks) pays a return visit to the dark, alternate universe of second season’s “Crossover” to save his wife.

think I would be happy writing DS9 at all. I know Ira thought it was. When I turned it down and said I didn’t want to do it, we had all been assuming that we would all go to VOYAGER. We had already started getting excited about launching a new series and I was intrigued by being on the ground floor. All of a sudden we were told it would be different. I have to say I’m really glad. I’m really glad to be here. I had an option to go to VOYAGER now which I’m not even thinking about doing. Ron and I came in and saw all this new stuff they were doing with the Dominion and we realized what a rich backdrop it was for storytelling and how much fun these characters are to write.”

DS9’s premise, rather than closing off possibilities for the two veteran ship-show writers, opened new kinds of storytelling. “We can get away with things I could never have done on TNG,” enthused Moore. “We can do episodes that are just comedies, like ‘House of Quark.’ We don’t have to put the stupid ship in jeopardy every week. The conflict between the characters was interesting. I just became fascinated with the fact that we could do different character scenes on this show. Just the whole stylistic way the show was approached was different than THE NEXT GENERATION. Guest stars can come aboard the station where the *Enterprise* was this fortress where you knew exactly who came and went. If you didn’t recognize someone it was intruder alert. On DS9 you don’t expect to recognize everybody so it is a lot easier to get stories started on our standing sets.”

Added Moore, “That is the challenge. You sit down and approach each scene and each episode trying to find a new way to do it or at least a way you personally haven’t done before. To find a way to put a character in a difficult position and find new and interesting things along the way. That became the difficulty in writing TNG’s last season, because it just felt that I’d been there and done that. It became harder and harder to explore the characters. But on DS9, because the characters are still so new—there is so much you haven’t done with them—you can still keep pushing the boundaries. You can find different things in their background. [For example] we don’t know the first thing about Kira, her family, or anything like that, so there are all kinds of influences to draw on. As you get deeper into this series you look back at the characters and can play whole different levels of things like we did with ‘Tapestry’ [in which Captain Picard is given a second chance at youth.] You couldn’t have done that show in the first couple years, but after five or six years on the air you look at Picard’s over-all character and you start realizing that this guy was a whole lot different as a youngster. He has become so tight and so starched, with very rigid views, and then you can go back and figure out why. But in the early going you are still making it up as you go along.”

#### THE SIKKO MANIFESTO

DS9’s third season began with an ambitious and costly two-part episode called “The Search,” in which Sisko and company journey into the Gamma Quadrant aboard the new battleship *Defiant*, in search of the Founders. After being attacked by the Jem’Hadar, Kira and Odo flee on a shuttle and land on a mysterious rogue planet. There they find a glowing lake of shapeshifter goo—Odo has found his

# STAR TREK DEEP SPACE NINE

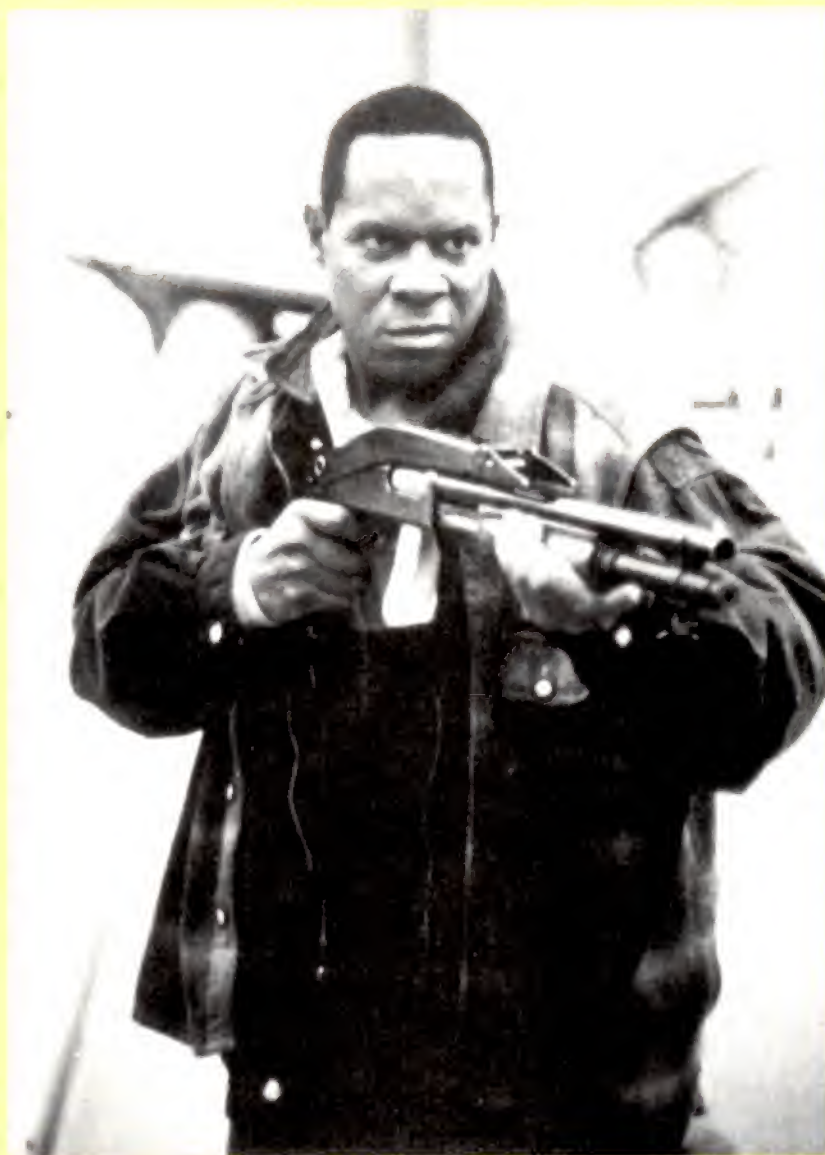
## TIME-TRAVEL EPIC

*The story behind the making of "Past Tense,"  
the two-part saga of San Francisco in 2024.*

By Dale Kutzera

"I sold Ira snake oil in the second season," said Robert Hewett Wolfe of his time-travel story that would become "Past Tense." "I sold him the idea that Sisko would wake up on Santa Monica beach. He would say, 'I am a starship captain,' and the locals would say, 'Yeah, right.'"

From such acorns do mighty trees grow, and Wolfe's notion of Sisko as a homeless man would, after many permutations, result in one of STAR TREK's most ambitious and socially conscious stories. "Past Tense," which aired in the middle of DEEP SPACE NINE's third season, is considered by many connected with the show to be a high point of the series. The story sends Sisko, Bashir, and Dax three centuries into Earth's past, when a power fluctuation in the annular confinement beam affects the transporter. The trio materialize in San Francisco circa 2024 to find an American civilization sharply divided between haves and have-nots. Apprehended by two police officers, Sisko and Bashir are taken to a sanctuary district—a walled-off camp where the homeless and jobless are segregated from the rest of society. There Sisko learns they have arrived in the middle of a crucial event in Earth history—the Bell Riots. Meanwhile, Dax is rescued by a wealthy software executive and is treated to all the comforts of the upper crust. The two-part tale features high production values and an unusually direct social message. Where many STAR TREK morality tales disguised their social agenda behind a science fiction facade (remember the half-white, half-black aliens in "Let That Be Your Last Battlefield?"), "Past Tense" hits the issue of homelessness square on—sometimes



Avery Brooks as Sisko, sent three centuries back into Earth's past by a transporter glitch, a take on "City On the Edge of Forever."

with a sledgehammer.

The trick for the writing staff was to devise a way to get the crew back in time. Well aware of the similarities the plot had to the classic TREK episode "City on the Edge of Forever," Wolfe would have preferred not to use time travel at all. "We were hiding from time travel for a long time," he said. "I had an idea where Sisko's consciousness gets disconnected from his body and hooked into the mind of an ancestor with a similar genetic makeup, like two radios tuned to the same fre-

quency. The idea came from the fact that my wife has been a counselor for the mentally ill homeless for a long time, and I've learned that just because they say they are something they couldn't be, doesn't mean it's not true for them."

"Part of Robert's idea was that Sisko would see a cop and it would be Rene Auberjonois without his make-up," added Rene Echevarria, who wrote the teleplay for the second part of the story. "The homeless counselor would be Dax without the spots. Sisko would be seeing these blurry things and realize he was seeing through some weird filter. Robert wrote different drafts of the story with different tech."

"No one else bought it so eventually we decided to do a time-travel show," continued Wolfe. "Then it was a question of how to do something cool and still do the homeless stuff. I actually stole from myself again, because I pitched a story to TNG where Geordi and Picard crash-lands in Watts right before the riots. Then Ira came up with the idea of Attica and so we sort of spun all those things together and came up with this two-parter."

Although Ira Behr usually avoids stories with a heavy social message, "Past Tense" allowed him to draw from the rebellious events of the

'60s and early '70s that had influenced so many of his generation. "Something that touched my life on many levels was Kent State," he said. "Two things happened. First, everyone I knew who was still for the war in Vietnam began to shift their opinion. They were killing our own kids. Maybe this had gone too far? That had a tremendous impact. Second: everyone who was smoking pot, dropping acid, and into the hippy, alternative lifestyle, with communist manifestoes and Che Guevara posters in their houses, all



World-weary cop Dick Miller, Sisko and Bashir (Siddig El Fadli) trod through San Francisco in 2024 in "Past Tense, Part I," to find a world deeply divided between the haves and the have-nots.

started thinking about becoming accountants. I felt that killed any chance of any real change on a certain level in this country.

"Another reason to do it that I felt strongly about, was that in 1995 Forrest Gump is not a multi-millionaire. The reality in 1995 is that the mentally challenged among us are homeless, and it's not good to be schizophrenic, slow, unintelligent, or poor. FORREST GUMP is a lousy fantasy for a lousy time. But fantasy reflects the time. I felt we needed to address the kind of issues that are being overlooked. I remember people used to see the homeless and walk around them and be suspicious, or scared, or caring. To me, they are now living sculpture. People walk right past them. They

Clint Howard as a homeless derelict who learns Sisko and Bashir's true identity. Producer Ira Behr wanted to cast rocker Iggy Pop for the role.



should put up placards with their names and year, that's how bad it has gotten."

Behr and Wolfe drew from the story of Kent State and the current plight of the homeless to create a not-so-distant future of walled-in ghettos or "sanctuaries" where the homeless are kept out of sight and out of mind. There Sisko and Bashir meet the downtrodden everyman Webb (Bill Smitrovich), the world-weary cop, Vin (Dick Miller), and the young hoodlum, "The Hat" (Frank Military). "Robert did a great job on Part One, and I came in and did some work with him—basically on Vin," said Behr. "I really got into Vin and B.C. and the Hat. I told [costume designer] Bob Blackman, this guy only cares about this hat. This is a killer, but at the same time I don't want him playing the typical villain. I want something different. At the end, when he gives the hat away, it's not that he's suddenly become heroic or a good guy, he just doesn't want his hat to get hurt. You don't get to do stuff like that too often on STAR TREK. It was really fun to write the dialogue.

"Rene did a really nice job on Part Two. Again I got in there and worked on some of these characters. I wanted you to care when Webb dies. I wanted people to care in a weird way when Dick Miller's character died. I wanted to see if in a television show, for just two hours, if somewhere within that mix you can make people empathize. To get them to care about these homeless people whom you don't care about in your everyday life. Maybe for one second or an hour we can

**“There is something more difficult in what Sisko has to do than previous Trek captains. He’s gotta see it through to the end.”**

**—Producer Ira Behr—**

homeworld. In addition to a major character revelation for Odo, "The Search" introduced the *Defiant*, and attempted to set the character of Sisko apart from previous STAR TREK protagonists. Part one includes a virtual Sisko Manifesto delivered by Dax to her long-time friend.

#### DAX

*[Curson] could never see a set of Admiral's stars on your collar. He thought just making the decisions would never satisfy you. You had to implement them. See the results. Face the consequences. Curson always thought you were the kind of man who had to be in the thick of things, not behind some desk at headquarters.*

"The scene comes from a discussion Michael and I had about Sisko" said Behr, "because at the time there was the feeling that the identity of the show was still not as crystal clear as it needed to be. I kept thinking about the third season of TNG doing 'Captain's Log' and talking about Picard being an archaeologist and how little we knew about Picard at that point. Yet there was a clear image of that show because it was a simpler franchise. Something about being on the ship and going places makes everything slide in easier—even though it's not the reality. You see him standing on the ship all the time doing the same basic things. I'm not saying it's repetitive in a bad way, it's just easier to learn who he is by what he does. Sisko's job is much more complicated and he has to handle a lot of different aspects of being in that particular spot in the Alpha Quadrant.

"So what can we do to make Sisko somewhat clearer as a character? It seemed to me there is something more difficult in what Sisko has to do than other previous Starfleet captains that we saw. He's gotta be a guy that sees things through to the end. Michael got excited by that idea; building and taking the pieces, dealing with people

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Michael Piller, left the show to Ira Behr third season.



Co-executive producer Ira Steven Behr, who took over the day-to-day running of the DS9 franchise from departing series co-creator Michael Piller third season, filming "Explorers" with Terry Farrell.

care about these people again, and maybe you'll take something away from that."

"There are only two things I regret about the episode. One: even though Clint Howard did a wonderful job as the homeless guy who saw aliens, I wanted Iggy Pop for that part. But Iggy was doing a concert in Spain and wasn't available. The second thing is that we were supposed to have 40 extras lying dead in the street in the shot after they come out. Because of a production screw-up that scene wasn't shot on the day it was supposed to be shot. Somebody dropped the ball and the next day I had to go out with a camera and 15 extras and try to make it look like something. I wanted to really rub people's noses in it. I wanted blood and bodies of all these people lying there on a city street. We didn't get the shot and I was very, very pissed off at the time, but in the long run I don't know if it matters."

"I took a thread in Part One, where Bashir asks what he would do in this situation," said Echevarria, "and picked up on that in Part Two when he says to a woman hostage, 'It's not your fault things are the way they are.' And he really means it. Then she says, 'Everybody tells themselves that and nothing ever changes.' There is no easy answer and we were trying to keep our characters from sounding condescending."

Somewhere between the stratified world depicted in "Past Tense" and the apparently peaceful future of Gene Roddenberry's 24th century, humankind must have figured out the answer to such difficult social problems. To their credit, the DS9 writers didn't attempt to write the answers, but simply dramatized the questions in a sobering fashion. "I got to set up the problem and then walk away,"

said Wolfe. "The thing I like about Part Two is that it doesn't provide any easy answers. There are no easy solutions. You just can't ignore the problem. That's the message of the show. You just can't walk by that homeless guy every day and pretend he doesn't exist. You have to acknowledge that he exists and figure out what do about that. That's what TV is all about. The power of TV and film is you say here is something fun, some popcorn, and then by eating the popcorn we can slip you a little bit of a message."

"I think Gene would say people in the

Sisko and Bashir, homeless in the 21st century in "Past Tense, Part I," scripted by Robert Hewett Wolfe, the season's high point.



**“It doesn't provide any easy answers. There are no easy solutions. You just can't ignore the problem. That's the show's message.”**

—*Producer Robert Hewett Wolfe*—

24th century have the power to do whatever they want to,” Wolfe continued, “but they choose not to. I think Gene really believed the human race could improve upon itself and people in the 24th century are better than people in the 20th century. They do the right thing not because the Federation is saying, ‘Do the right thing or we'll stun you,’ but because they really are better educated and they better understand the impact of what they do. They are better people and that's part of the beauty of Gene's vision. It holds up this ideal that you can be better, you can do the right thing. It's okay and it's good.”

“I'm not sure Gene could have told you how it all went down in terms of answers,” said Behr. “There are a number of reasons. I think this country is very loathe to pay taxes. This country is loathe to spend the money needed to get a good education system going again. Everyone is so afraid of government intervention, particularly because the bureaucracy has gotten so big that nothing

seems to work anymore. I think you need business and government to get together and, like they did back in the depression, get people employed. If we all have to suffer a little bit and dig deeper into our pockets, then that's what we have to do. I know that if nothing is done, if people just try to hold onto their little piece of pie and allow themselves to be lulled by those preying on their fears, then this country is on the downhill slope of history. Our days are numbered as players. People right now literally don't want to do anything, they don't trust anyone, not their neighbors, not their the politicians. It's a sad state of affairs it really is.

“I've seen things that say ‘Past Tense’ is typical STAR TREK liberal dogma and humanistic claptrap. That may be so. I can't be the judge of it, I'm too close to it. All I know is we need a wake-up call. Now you can't do a real wake-up call in an hour or two of TV, but this is not just ‘Say no to drugs,’ this is not some simplistic message about some deeper problem. Those messages are so easy to digest. I was hoping this wouldn't be as easy to digest.” □

and visions of masked phantoms, Bashir suspects she may be rejecting her symbiont. A trip to the Trill home world reveals—hang on to your seats—Dax's iso-boramin levels are haywire! But wait, there is more (there better be), apparently Dax had a host she never knew about, and there is something fishy about the whole symbiont program, and...oh I give up. This episode lost me the minute the phantom masked man appeared.

Part of the problem is that the story takes far too long to get going as we don't arrive on the Trill home world until the third act. Another part is the reliance on medical techno-babble. Engineering techno-babble is bad enough, but in the age of ER, can anyone be expected to take STAR TREK medicine seriously? It's clear that in the STAR TREK universe, the level of medical knowledge is based entirely on how it can service the plot. Finally, a mystery-intrigue episode such as this depends largely on the emotional impact of the deep, dark secret. In last season's TNG episode "Dark Page," the secret that Troi had an older sister who died carried some emotional weight. Here the secret of Dax's hidden host, or that there is something of a Trill Watergate cover-up regarding the compatibility of hosts and symbionts, carries none.

Apparently, the writers were as confused as the audience with this episode, which required extensive revisions even as the cameras were rolling. "I think everyone is a little less than happy with 'Equilibrium,'" said Ron Moore. "I was there when we broke it. It was a difficult one to bring off. I think we were all a little disappointed. When you're telling a mystery and you're getting into problems and rewriting, you start locking yourself into things and then you try to make connective tissue out of it and it just becomes a mess."

Another culprit may be the source material for the story, which began when Michael Piller's friend, Christopher Teague, took the executive producer to the vanishing-mask act of magician Jeff Magnus McBride. "Michael thought this guy was stupendous and he said we should use him some way," said Rene Echevarria. "We were originally wrestling it down as an Odo show when Ron said the masks coming off is a much better metaphor for a Trill. We all sparked to that and I had been working over the summer on a show in which there was a secret in Curson's past that Dax did not know about. It was a tough show. We really got to a point where we were writing the next day's material. Ira eventually came in and worked with me and we worked all day long trying to get it ready to go. This was the beginning of a rocky period."

"It was a very difficult show," said Ira Behr. "It was a show that could have used two hours and five more sets, but ultimately it told an interesting little tale. It's a fascinating subject. So fascinating it's deep waters to get into. I just love the scene with the guardian and the Trills—weird kind of stuff we don't quite understand. I also like a society that's basically medical. It's a bunch of people really involved in their bodies. It was weekend work. That's tough when it's weekend work."

Dax (Terry Farrell) cradles a past host she never knew in "Equilibrium," uncovering a symbiont Watergate on the Trill homeworld.



Odo morphs behind Gregory Sierra as Entek in "Second Skin," foiling a plot by the Obsidian Order to convince Kira she's a Cardassian.

"I think your daughter must have loved you very much."

—Kira

### SECOND SKIN

★★★★

10/22/94. Episode: 51. Stardate: not given. Written by Robert Hewitt Wolfe. Directed by Les Landau.

Kira is abducted by the Cardassians and wakes up to find herself...a Cardassian. As explained by Entek (Gregory Sierra), a calm, soothing member of the Obsidian Order, her real name is Iliana Ghemor, and she is an operative of the Order who was surgically altered and equipped with the memories of Kira Nerys. In major denial (understandably) Kira confronts, Tekeny Ghemor (Lawrence Pressman) who claims to be her father. As the rest of the crew attempts to locate her, Kira is presented with a convincing body of evidence (literally) that she is in fact Cardassian.

"Second Skin was stealing from myself," said story editor Robert Hewitt Wolfe, who was promoted to producer for DS9's currently airing fourth season. "When I first came to TNG, I pitched a story where Q turned Picard, Data and Troi into Romulans and stuck them on a Romulan ship. They didn't buy that one. So I kept thinking about a way to do that as a DS9 episode and for a long time thought it would be cool if O'Brien was a Cardassian who had been replaced when serving on the Rutledge. The problem was (O'Brien's daughter) Molly. How did he have this kid that looked human? I couldn't make that work, but Kira has no family and would be easily replaced. I thought the real neat thing would be to give her what she has probably always wanted—a real father, a family, a loving home environment—but make it come with her being a Cardassian."

There is a long STAR TREK tradition of taking a regular cast member and placing them in alien makeup, dating back to "The Enterprise Incident" on the original show in which Kirk masqueraded as a Romulan. "Second Skin" transcends this often-used gimmick by making this alternate life on Cardassia almost desirable. "I've had experiences in my life where my understanding of the world changes," continued Wolfe, "and where I may have had to readjust my thinking on all the stuff I was brought up to believe. For me it's about realizing everything you may have believed might be wrong, and then you have to sit down and consider what part is you. The ending of the show is kind of vague. The bottom line is Bashir says 'You're not a Cardassian. It's okay, don't worry, everything is fine.' I don't buy it. I don't think he can tell and I don't think it matters whether she is a Cardassian or a Bajoran. As long as she believes she's Kira, she is Kira Nerys."

"What I liked best about 'Second Skin' was that it was the first show Robert took all the way," said Ira Behr, sounding like a proud parent. "I gave notes, but I didn't do any writing on it. Michael didn't do any writing on it. It's all Robert. That to him was better than a coming-of-age party."

Behr's influence is evident, however, in the wonderful casting of the episode. Lawrence Pressman creates an anguished father that anyone, even a Bajoran, could empathize with. And Gregory Sierra puts a new, haughty spin on the Cardassian race, a

most worthy foil for Andrew Robinson's always watchable Garak. It's a shame they had to kill him.

"I want to be with my people."

—Jem'Hadar

### THE ABANDONED

★★1/2

2/9/95. Production Number: 52. Stardate: not given. Written by Thomas E. Maio and Steve Warnek. Directed by Avery Brooks.

A small infant is found in some salvaged wreckage Quark purchased, stirring paternal feelings in Sisko, whose son, Jake, is rapidly growing up. When the infant matures at an accelerated rate, however, it's clear the child is in fact, a Jem'Hadar (Bumper Robinson), bred for fighting. Now it's Odo's turn to feel guilty, for it was his race of changeling Founders that created the Jem'Hadar. In a desperate attempt to atone for the sins of his people, Odo tries to reason with the boy, and train him to control his violent instincts.

"What we wanted to do is keep the Jem'Hadar alive," said Behr. "I've read places where people said it was a way to do 'I Borg' [6th season TNG episode in which one Borg, named Hugh, humanizes the entire race]. I don't know whether that's true or not. We wanted to do a Jem'Hadar show that didn't live or die on whether we could beat the Jem'Hadar in a fight. That's one of the problems of keeping the Jem'Hadar alive; once you beat them in combat—once you really nail them—are they the same villains they were? From the very beginning, when we first sat around and talked about the Jem'Hadar—even before we had a name for them—we talked about them being mercenary drug addicts and we wanted to find out about that. One of the things I'm fascinated with is addiction. All types of addiction and what it does to people. I thought it was an interesting show and put Odo in an interesting place that I thought was really important to see. We talked about him stepping out to become more accessible. He chose the human form—what does that mean? Is he a friend or isn't he? I think the jury is still out. It's not easy to walk away from your people."

Director Avery Brooks continues to draw interesting, personable performances from the cast—including himself as a father reluctant to let go of his central role in the life of his son. The B-story here involves Sisko's skepticism of Jake's relationship with an older Dabo girl and is a fine counterpoint to Odo's relationship with the Jem'Hadar. Michael Westmore's Jem'Hadar makeup and some interesting morphing effects supervised by Glenn Neufeld also stand out.



Odo morphs on the Promenade in an attempt to capture a fleeing Jem'Hadar child in "The Abandoned," effects designed by Gary Hudzel.

"Warning. Worker revolt in progress in ore-processing unit five. Security counter measures initiated."

—Cardassian Computer

### CIVIL DEFENSE

★★★1/2

11/05/94. Production Number: 53. Stardate: not given. Written by Mike Krohn. Directed by Reza Badiyi.

While searching through a remote ore process-  
continued on page 98

# STAR TREK DEEP SPACE NINE

## DESIGNING THE DEFIANT

*Co-executive producer Ira Behr asked for a ship to fight the Jem'Hadar, and gave Sisko a bridge.*

By Dale Kutzera

It has a sleek, low profile, thick armor plating, and phaser banks that go rat-at-tat when they turn Jem'Hadar fighters into so much space debris. It's the *Defiant*, the "kick-ass" brainchild of Ira Behr and Robert Hewett Wolfe that has not only infused DS9 with a cool new narrative tool, but provided Avery Brook's Captain Sisko a center chair to command from.

When Behr first approached Michael Piller about adding a ship to the show (and when Piller in turn, presented the idea to Rick Berman), the general idea was to create a larger version of the Runabout. For directors, the cramped standing set for the existing Runabout cabin could only be filmed from a limited number of positions. For the writers, the small space limited the kinds of scenes that could be set there. Another influence in the design evolution of the ship was the parallel evolution of the starship *Voyager*. Berman, Piller, and Taylor were careful to ensure that one ship did not look too much like the other.

"I did not have a whole lot to do with the design itself, except to say what we wanted," said Behr. "Even though some directors will still bitch about it, we wanted cramped quarters. We wanted to get the feeling that this is not a luxury ship. The bridge looked like it was there to be used for a specific purpose. Everything is close together so if one guy got blown out of his chair, another guy was real close to jump in and take over. To me, the starships are beautiful pieces of machinery. They are beautiful to look at, they're stately, but when I look at the ships I don't think of battling the Jem'Hadar. I think of hundreds of



Sisko (Avery Brooks) in the command chair on the *Defiant*'s bridge in "The Search, Part I," equipped with a Romulan cloaking device and designed to fight the Borg.

families and kids roaming corridors. And yet the *Defiant* couldn't look dangerous. Starfleet is not a dangerous organization. They do not strike terror in the hearts of their enemies."

Noted Herman Zimmerman, DS9's production designer and head of the show's art department, "The *Defiant* was a direct result of the need on the part of the writer/producers of the show to get away from the station, to give them a vehicle that would allow them to travel at higher warp speeds than the Runabout about is capable of, and to carry more armament and more personnel. Interestingly enough we didn't get much advance notice. The art department found out about the *Defiant* just about a week before the end of the second season. We held one set designer and myself over a couple weeks just to do some preliminary work and then, when the hiatus was over, the first thing we did was work on the *Defiant*. We didn't really get a firm handle on its requirements until we got the script."

Ron Moore's script for the season opener, "The Search" presented the *Defiant* as a ship designed by Benjamin Sisko to battle the

Borg. It was a one-of-a-kind prototype that still had a few kinks to work out of its system. "What the script called for was a war ship," said Zimmerman. "The most powerful ship for its size in Starfleet. It's faster and more capable just as a fighter plane would be faster and more capable than a bomber. But because it's a prototype, it has a certain quiriness as any high-speed prototype aircraft would have. You don't know exactly how it will react in a given situation."

The task of designing this fighter ship fell to illustrator James Martin. Although Martin had designed numerous

ships for DS9, including the beetle-like Jem'Hadar fighters, he has never designed a completely new Federation vessel. "I love to do ships," said Martin. "That's my favorite thing in the art department. I had a chance to work with [senior illustrator and technical consultant] Rick Sternbach on the Runabout way back on the first season, and I've had my share of ships through the last couple seasons—the Maquis fighter, a couple Cardassian ships, a Bajoran ship—just kind of ship-of-the-week things, but the *Defiant* was special."

When Martin's original sketches of a bigger, beefier version of the Runabout were rejected, he turned in some variations on a mini-starship theme. These too were rejected due to the impending launch of VOYAGER. Eventually, Martin settled on a Federation vessel he had sketched for a second season episode of DS9. The sketch had been rejected for that show, but with slight modifications worked wonderfully for the *Defiant*.

"They wanted something that looked like it had some teeth," said Martin. "Like it was ready to do battle with the Borg. That





The bridge of the *Defiant* as conceived by production designer Herman Zimmerman. Behr asked for a fighting ship that was utilitarian, with cramped quarters. Right: Jim Martin's armored turtle design.

dictated that it wasn't going to look like our other ships. Early on a decision was made that there would be no nacelles. This was going to be something new. The look that we gave the *Defiant* is an armored, internally protected look. Kind of like a turtle. I personally think that nature supplies us with some really brilliant designs. Some of the best ships I've done actually have that animal look to them. Any time you do a ship based on an aspect of nature you will have a great ship. That's my secret—don't tell anyone."

Once the general concept was approved by the producers, Martin started work on refining the design and creating more detailed drawings. "Once we locked on to the general feel of the *Defiant* we started to fine-tune different aspects of it," he said. "Ultimately we do the drawings that go to the model-maker, a three quarter view, a top view, side view, bottom view, and a back view to give them as much information as you can about what the ideas for the ship are. Working with Herman, I will render concept views of the ship, call out different details, and note what things are. Then the model-maker takes over."

"There's a gap between what is conceptualized and what's actually going to be a practical model. There are changes and improvements along the way. They may change surface detail or bring the cowlings down and give it more of a swooped feel. Until you start seeing it in three dimensions you're getting a new take on what the design is evolving into. There are changes made along the way and that is part of the fun of the ship evolving. Gary Hutzler was involved with [modelmaker] Tony Meininger in making the *Defiant* a fun, shootable model."

Martin is particularly pleased that some of his favorite

elements of the ship made it intact into the final model. Among them are the dark recessed areas in the ship's underbelly, the heavy cowlings over the warp engines, and the ship's front snout. "In the earliest manifestations, the front nose section had a cockpit feel to it," he said. "In the present *Defiant* that is not where the bridge is. The bridge is further back under the circular areas. But it has always been in the design, this tucked-in piece that has this scooped-in, shark mouth bottom to it which was from a very early concept. It's great that aspect stayed in, even though that has gone from being a cockpit to being a forward sensor antenna array."

Simultaneous with Martin's designing the exterior of the vessel, Herman Zimmerman was planning the interior sets. "It is small inside, more like a submarine. Space is at a premium," Zimmerman said. "If you look at the crew's quarters they are really small rooms with built-in bunks and not a great deal of luxury as you would find on the *Enterprise*. It's certainly not a ship for families and children as the *Enterprise* was."

The initial episode called only for a bridge and crews' quarters and that's exactly what Zimmerman delivered. Even with these

Chief O'Brien (Colm Meaney) mans the *Defiant's* engineering section in "The Adversary." Noted Zimmerman, "It's small inside, more like a submarine."



**“They wanted it to look like it had some teeth, like it was ready to do battle with the Borg. We gave it an armored turtle look.”**

—Designer Jim Martin—

sets there was the opportunity for experimentation as during the *Defiant's* first outing into the Gamma Quadrant, when it is attacked and nearly destroyed by Jem'Hadar ships. In rebuilding the destroyed set, Zimmerman took the opportunity to adjust the



design. "We basically made changes for the ease of shooting," he said. "We put casters on all the computer stations around the perimeter, making it easier for the camera crew to move walls. And we lost a platform that was there in the first episode. Originally the back of the bridge was going to have a table just as you saw on the first episode. They were going to have meetings there, but it was too cramped. It looked nice, but on a TV budget as opposed to a feature budget you don't have the luxury of going up and down levels as you might like. It was causing unnecessary problems for the actors. We also improved the graphics considerably by adding more TV sets. We took what had been a fairly bland area with just some metal wall panels on it and made them into either back-lit polarmotion or video computer graphics. The electronic wallpaper on the *Defiant* is probably the most successful of all the starship bridges I've designed."

Already Zimmerman has added corridors and an engine room to the ship, and anticipates that as stories warrant it, and producers budget for it, they will add transporter and mess-hall facilities. "I can't complain," said Behr. "I remember going in and seeing the Promenade and saying, 'My God, I could live here.' This is a fun place to be. We're hoping that we get that with the *Defiant*. The fans are already asking for *Defiant* play sets and models." □

ing station on DS9, Sisko, Jake and O'Brien accidentally trigger an automated Cardassian security program. Dax and Kira work to shut off the computer program, but only succeed in triggering more automated security measures. Falling from the frying pan and into the fire, Kira triggers the ultimate security measure: the self-destruction of the entire station.

Mike Krohn, an established writer of features, (GREEN LANTERN, GUNSLINGER) thoroughly enjoyed the assignment even though the episode was rushed into production. With just a week to produce the first draft, he spent two days breaking the story with the DS9 staff. "I've never been in a break session before," said Krohn. "It was the most fun I've had in years. You have Ira, Robert, Rene, and sometimes Ron in a room together and there is an enthusiasm there. It's like you're all astronauts together, strapped to the same rocket. You just pull together and make it happen."

"We wanted to do an action show," said Behr, "a plot-driven cliffhanger and it almost killed us. The unfortunate thing was we were running long and had to cut a terrific end-scene of a classic TREK computer-run-amok story. The only drawback is the forced comedy relief between Odo and Quark. Best of all, Civil Defense explores the guts of DS9, perhaps the most underutilized character on the show.

**"Don't tell me in eight lifetimes you've never climbed a tree."**

—Deral

## MERIDIAN

★1/2

11/12/94. Production Number: 54. Stardate: 48423.2. Teleplay by Mark Gehred O'Connell. Story by Hilary Bader and Evan Carlos Somers. Directed by Jonathan Frakes.

While exploring the Gamma Quadrant in the *Defiant*, Sisko, Dax, Bashir, and O'Brien are dumfounded when a planet appears where none had existed before. The planet, Meridian, apparently shifts between dimensions every few decades. During the brief interval in which the planet is in



Dax falls for Deral (Brett Cullen), a ghostly inhabitant of "Meridian," as DS9 does its own take on BRIGADOON, but without the songs.

this galaxy, Dax falls in love with one resident, Deral (Brett Cullen). Then, when Van Johnson accidentally shoots one of the townspeople, he flees with hunting buddy Gene Kelly, who fears he will never see Cyd Charisse again...no, wait a minute, that was BRIGADOON. Then again, so is "Meridian."

"It's the best show we ever did," said Ira Behr, who couldn't hold a straight-faced for more than a second before adding, "Gotcha!" The idea for doing BRIGADOON came to him in the second season, when he hoped to pull a classic Michael Piller trick and adapt a well-known story to space. "I really love BRIGADOON and since nobody told me to shut up, we wound up doing it. It was a very difficult show. Building a society in 42 minutes, learning to care about them, and doing a love story is extremely



Ducat proves of little help when the crew of DS9 trigger an automated Cardassian security device in "Civil Defense," a neat action show.

tough. It was one of the low points of the year—after 'Civil Defense' and 'Meridian' back to back."

Mark Gehred O'Connell, given the thankless assignment of scripting Hilary Bader's story, had to contend not only with a tricky love story, but an original B-story that involved Quark negotiating for the trading rights with the alternate universe. Eventually that story was dropped entirely as it began to overshadow the main plot, and a sophomoric gag dreamed up by former intern Evan Somers was dusted off and put in place. This joke involves Quark trying to take a holographic photo of Kira in order to program her likeness into an erotic holo-suite for a love-struck customer.

For all the hands that contributed to "Meridian" however, no one thought to answer the most obvious question: why not just evacuate the damn colony? "Well, that's an interesting question. Why didn't they rescue them?" said O'Connell. "As we saw it, there was no need for them to be rescued. The whole point was these people live a wonderful existence there. They would not want to leave. The only thing is they have this tech-problem where the planet is becoming unstable and they may cease to exist. That would have been a reason to evacuate them, but of course, the first thing our guys think of is, 'Let's fix the tech-problem.' They have O'Brien there and by God they're going to fix this wobbly planet."

**"You're trying to be a hero. Terrorists don't get to be heroes."**

—Kira

## DEFIANT

★★★

1/19/95. Production Number: 55. Stardate: 48467.3. Written by Ronald D. Moore. Directed by Cliff Bole.

Wil Riker's evil twin duplicate, Tom, (from TNG's sixth season episode "Second Chances") returns as a member of the Maquis. After stealing the *Defiant* with Kira on board, he sets out to attack a hidden armada of Cardassian ships. Sisko has no choice but to travel to the Cardassian home world's war room and join forces with Gul Ducat (Mark Alaimo) in trying to stop Tom before he causes an

The crew gets bitten by the love bug, a STAR TREK staple, in "Fascination," as Sisko and Dax succumb to a comic Betazoid epidemic.



intergalactic incident.

"We've been kicking around an idea for Tom Riker and were talking at one point about establishing him as the new leader of the Maquis. That he is why they are suddenly kicking ass," said Ron Moore. "I was asked to get started on the story and the first thing that came to mind was him stealing the *Defiant*. I felt that could be really cool as well as the expectation of Riker coming on the show and putting the moves on Kira—to play that up with the audience and then take it away from them. It was a lot of fun to write. I thought Jonathan [Frakes] did a nice job making Tom a little more dynamic and interesting a character than Wil. We might see him again. We haven't really discussed the story, but we have talked about rescuing him someday."

"Basically we wanted to do FAIL-SAFE," added Ira Behr of the 1964 film, directed by Sidney Lumet. "I like the idea of the hero being surrounded by enemies and basically having to live out the story looking at the color of lights and blips on a screen. To me that's tension and frustration and an interesting dilemma. We also talked about see Ensign Ro in the Maquis, but the story never worked out, so it was Tom Riker. Another thing I am fascinated by is what is a hero? I thought that was a great take on it—defining your own identity. And it was good to give Kira someone to play off of, because at that point we were already getting less than enamored by the whole Bareil-Kira story. We wanted to see how she would be with someone else."



Jonathan Frakes reprises his TNG role as Will Ryker's evil twin, now a member of the Maquis, hijacking Kira and the "Defiant."

"Defiant" starts out on the right track, with Tom Riker flirting Kira into giving him a tour of the *Defiant*. The tension dissipates a bit, however, as the show's mid section seems padded with some rather talky scenes between Kira and Tom on the *Defiant*, and Sisko and Ducat in the Cardassian war room (including a rather dull speech about Ducat's son's birthday). Not until the fourth act is Tom's goal of uncovering a secret Cardassian fleet, controlled by the dreaded Obsidian Order, revealed. By that time we have slogged through a lot of labored technobabble, suppositions, and deductions. Kira's armchair psychoanalysis of Tom's envy of Wil Riker seems especially contrived. Where in FAIL-SAFE the war room scenes had a pressure-cooker intensity, here they just seem budget-driven—a rationale for reducing the *Defiant*'s space battles to little Pacman like graphics. Although some of these quibbles are directed at Moore's script, I lay most at the feet of director Cliff Bole, who failed to create a pervading sense of tension.

**"People are acting very strangely today."**

—Vekek Bareil

## FASCINATION

★1/2

11/26/94. Production Number: 56. Stardate: not given. Teleplay by Philip Lazechnik. Story by Ira Steven Behr & James Crocker. Directed by Avery Brooks.

As the Betazoid representative at the Bajoran  
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# STAR TREK DEEP SPACE NINE

## BAJORAN OSCAR WINNER

*Louise Fletcher talks about her continuing role as Vedek Winn, the Bajoran priestess to hiss.*

*By Sue Feinberg & Judd Hollander*

Far away in the galaxy is a place called Bajor, home of prophets, warriors, diplomats and farmers and one very amoral woman named Vedek Winn, played to sinister perfection by Oscar winning actress Louise Fletcher.

Fletcher joined the cast of STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE for one simple reason; they asked her. And it took no time at all for her to agree. "I figured if Whoopi Goldberg could do it, why not? It might be fun," said Fletcher. "I think it's interesting to play someone powerful. And I loved the idea of playing a ruthless and ambitious religious leader. Sort of like Jean Kirkpatrick or William Bennet under the Reagan administration."

"Ruthless" is putting it mildly. Fletcher's character is STAR TREK's version of "Teflon Don," no matter what she does, or who she does it to, nothing sticks to her. For two seasons she's lied, cheated, blackmailed and orchestrated numerous power plays to become Bajor's spiritual high priestess. "A kind of archbishop who was elected Pope." She's also helped drive Major Kira's lover to his death through overwork—she called it "duty." All the while, she's been consolidating her power base and overseeing her domain with an iron fist. Sisko and Company may get her minions and partners, but they can never

prove anything against Winn herself. And whatever she's up to, it's with that same wide-eyed innocent smile and sing-song voice, which she uses to perfection in order to cajole, frustrate and intimidate—something not many are able to do. It is this type of attitude that makes her a classic STAR TREK villain. It's also a testament to her acting ability that the character is so well-known, considering that she's only been on two or three times per season since her debut second season.

The character of Winn is in some ways the completion of a personal circle for Fletcher. Born in Birmingham, Alabama, her father was an Episcopal clergyman, and mis-



Fletcher, whose Oscar-winning Nurse Ratched got a Bajoran makeover.





Fletcher as Vekek Winn on board the station, plaguing Odo and Sisko in the three-part trilogy that opened the show's second season. Fletcher has been a semi-regular ever since, stirring up trouble.

sionary to the deaf. She had a conservative childhood, which was comparatively short, due to the fact that both her parents were deaf. She and her three siblings had to grow up quickly and learn about life the hard way. "We made up our own rules," she said. "We had to become adults before we were adult and had to take on more responsibility." This was evidently practice for what was to come.

Almost from the beginning, Fletcher knew she wanted to be involved in the performing arts. "I never had any doubt about doing anything else." Originally she wanted to be an opera singer, then thought about a ballet career, but at 5'10" tall she was considered too tall. "In those days you couldn't be taller than the male. I also had crooked toes." Finally, acting won out.

After graduating from the University of North Carolina, where she majored in dramatic art, Fletcher was about to leave for New York to try her luck on the stage, which was her dream, when she received a

trip to L.A. as a graduation present. She (and two college roommates) embarked on a cross-country journey and ended up in Los Angeles two months later and she's been there ever since. When she arrived, Louise had exactly \$11 to her name. She got a job as a receptionist for a pediatrician, and went to acting classes at night. Then the acting jobs started and kept on coming. She quickly became a staple on numerous TV shows in the late '50s and early '60s, among them: MAVERICK, PLAYHOUSE NINETY, PERRY MASON, THE UNTOUCHABLES, and WAGON TRAIN. (The last is somewhat ironic in that Gene Roddenberry originally conceived STAR TREK as a "WAGON TRAIN to the stars.") In 1962 Fletcher married producer Jerry Bick (they divorced after 18 years) and had two sons. After a ten-year self-imposed hiatus, (she put her career on hold to concentrate on her family) she returned to acting in her first feature, Robert Altman's THIEVES LIKE US. This led to a string of films in-

**“I loved the idea of playing a ruthless and ambitious religious leader. I figured if Whoopi Goldberg could do it, why not me.”**

**—Louise Fletcher, Vekek Winn—**

cluding THE CHEAP DETECTIVE, THE LADY IN RED, THE BOY WHO COULD FLY and TWO MOON JUNCTION.

When talking about her career, the inevitable question about her role as Nurse Ratched in ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST (1975) comes up. "I think I will always be remembered for that role, because there has never been one to obliterate it [Fletcher laughed]. I'm beginning to have my doubts if it can be obliterated. She's in the lexicon, people use her name all the time. She lives. I think it's great." Fletcher is highly protective of the role which won her both the American and British Oscars as well as a Golden Globe, to the point of refusing to parody it on various comedy and variety shows. Fletcher recently appeared at Planet Hollywood in New York to donate her nurse's uniform from CUCKOO'S NEST to the restaurant's collection of memorabilia. When the outfit was retrieved from a San Francisco costume shop, where it had been in storage for the past 20 years, it still had the character's name tag attached.

Beside DS9, Fletcher has been quite active in the science fiction arena appearing in such films as STRANGE INVADERS (1983), BRAINSTORM (1983), INVADERS FROM MARS (1985), FIRE-STARTER (1989) and her most recent film, VIRTUOSITY, about virtual reality, with Denzel Washington, in which she played a crime czar. She recently had another go-round with virtual reality in the Fox TV series VR5. "VR5 was complicated. I played a character who was in her own virtual reality." Even though the series was quickly canceled, it developed a cult following, and there is talk of bringing it back on the air in one form or another.

"It does sound like I'm involved in a lot of science fiction," Fletcher laughed, but it's actually the part, rather than the genre, that attracts her to a role. "I just like real people to play. Somebody I could feel. I look to see if I think I have something I can bring to the character or if it can live for me."

And just how real is a Bajoran high priestess? "It's a chance to overact and that is something you love to do when you can," she said with a smile. "I think every now and then they like to do a storyline about



Fletcher co-starred with Frank Langella as Bajoran minister Jarro in second season's "The Circle." She equated working with Langella to doing a minuet, they were so in sync. "It was great," she said.

this religious leader who comes into their affairs and messes everything up, causing a lot of problems." Kidding aside, Fletcher has nothing but praise for DS9. "It's the most professional show I've been on in a long time, including movies sets. They have a huge crew, it just moves along like a giant machine. It's a formula they've got down to a science." Her first appearance on the show—in a three-part episode—was especially enjoyable in that she got the chance to work with Frank Langella, which she equates to doing a minuet, they were so in sync. "It was great."

Fletcher takes in stride the elaborate makeup, hairstyling and costuming that comes with the role, arriving for work early in the morning at Paramount studios on filming days. "I have an elaborate hairdo and I'm in there quite a while," she said. "Fortunately not as long as some others,

in person, Fletcher isn't at all like the roles that she plays. "It's a chance to overact," she said of Winn. "You love to do that whenever you can."



who have to go in at four in the morning. They hire special makeup people who have to be there ready to go at a quarter to four."

With her role as one of STAR TREK's guest stars comes a certain amount of recognition, with she accepts with amusement. Her kids, who are STAR TREK fans, think the whole idea is a lot of fun. And her brother, a former minister, thinks it's "the cat's pajamas."

While Fletcher's character suffered a bit of a setback her last time on the show—she tried to extend her grasp a bit too far and become Bajor's political leader—you shouldn't count her out just yet. One has a feeling that, to paraphrase the words of another sci-fi villain, "She'll be back" to cause more trouble for the people of Bajor and the crew of DS9.

Besides more appearances as Vedek Winn, in the currently airing fourth season, Fletcher has a host of movies coming up including MULHOLLAND FALLS with Nick Nolte and Melanie Griffith, TOLL-BOOTH where she plays Fariuza Balk's mother and THE APOCALYPSE ACCORDING TO DORIS with Tess Harper, which will mark her producing debut. When asked if she had to learn anything special in order to become a producer, she replied, "No, I lived with one for 18 years!" She also recently appeared in the play *Keely & Du* in Ireland as part of the Dublin Theatre Festival. "I guess I have been busy," she smiled. "I'm a journeyman."

With such a varied career one can't help but wonder if what she's done and where she's been has lived up to that childhood dream of becoming an actress—and winning the Oscar. "The reality is better than the dream. The dream you haven't earned. It's like a fantasy. But when you feel maybe you have earned it, it's great." Now if she could just figure out a way to shorten the time in the DS9 makeup chair... □

**“What we’re trying to do with Sisko is harder than with Picard. Kirk was married to his ship. Sisko is a family man who lost a wife.”**

**—Producer Rene Echevarria—**

on a day to day, week to week, year to year basis. So it seems like building is the perfect metaphor for Sisko and it just helped us somewhat focus him in clearer light."

Noted Echevarria, "What we're trying to do with Sisko is tougher than with Picard. It's very easy to give someone stature by making them aloof. Kirk was married to his ship and Sisko is a father, a family man who lost his wife. That's a part of the same man who, in addition to being the explorer and the builder, has other values. It's a subtler thing that we're going for with them and that is a little harder to draw."

Observed DS9's story editor Robert Hewett Wolfe, "We thought about it like you would with any show during summer hiatus. It's a chance to look at the characters and think what things would we like to do with these characters. We do that with all the characters. With Sisko we wanted to show that it is just as heroic to be the guy who has to come in after the *Enterprise* has warped away. He really has to do the hard work. That's who Sisko is—the guy that stays and builds the place."

Sisko and Odo were not the only characters to be given a tune-up. Through the third season the producers worked to develop the friendship between Dr. Bashir and Chief O'Brien, the distinctions between Quark and his Brother Rom and nephew Nog, and the marital strain between the O'Brien's. The later was motivated in part by the uncertainty of the availability of both Rosalind Chao, who plays Keiko O'Brien, and Colm Meaney who was excused from five episodes third season and will be given the same flexibility this season.

"There were grumblings that [Meaney] was leaving all year long," said Echevarria. "It looks like it was all a negotiation tactic. I think he was setting up some kind of deal with Paramount for some features for himself and Paramount has agreed to develop some feature projects for him so that's where that rumor came from. Colm wasn't



From TNG to DS9, Rene Echevarria.



Odo (Rene Auberjonois) gives Quark a piece of his mind in third season opener, "The Search, Part I," which explained the DEEP SPACE NINE constable's mysterious origins as a member of the Founders.

available a lot of the season—five or six episodes—and we didn't know when that would be. [Chao] has been busy doing movies and it was hard to know when she would be available. So it was hard to say let's do show 19 about Keiko. We thought 'Let's give her something interesting in the season: the couple separated by this distance—commuter love!—that is a very real problem for a lot of people.'

### ODO IS A FOUNDER

As if a new ship, fine-tuned Sisko, Jem'Hadar attacks, Starfleet intrigue and a rogue homeworld for Odo weren't enough, "The Search" also revealed that the curmudgeonly constable is, in fact, a member of the Founders' changeling race. This twist, which Behr and his staff had discussed through the second season, had originally been viewed as a revelation to be made at the end of the series, or at least as a season climax. Imagine Behr's surprise when Michael Piller said, "I have a funny idea. You're gonna say I'm crazy. The founders are changelings."

"That's a funny story," said Behr. "Robert [Hewett Wolfe], Jim [Crocker], Peter [Allen Fields] and myself had been talking about this for most of the second season; at the end of season seven we find the Founders and Odo is the future king—the return of the king. That's gonna be the end of the series. We thought it was a radical idea at the time, something we used to laugh about at lunch. By the end of the first season I was concerned that my DEEP SPACE legacy was going to be the Ferengi and nothing but the Ferengi. And I was hoping that it would be something else I could leave to the STAR TREK universe and I'm really glad it was the Dominion and the Founders and that whole thing. We've been able to get good use out of it. I think it's an important part of what makes working on the show

fun—you not only get to see an episode come to life, but come up with the whole. It's a kick."

### A KICK-ASS SHIP

Part of the motivation to add the *Defiant* to the series was to give Sisko an impressive ship to command. In creating the backstory for the vessel, Ron Moore wrote that Sisko himself designed it as an all-teeth fighting machine to combat a future Borg threat. Although many fans suspected the *Defiant* sprang from the mind of Moore or Echevarria, and that the new writers wanted a ship on which to set more TNG-like stories, the ship pre-dated their addition to the staff.

"I've heard all types of rumors about the *Defiant*," said Behr. "There are only two people who really know the true genesis of the *Defiant*. That happens to be me and Robert Wolf. What happened is this: we created the Dominion, the Jem'Hadar, and the Vorta at the end of last season and we said to ourselves, 'What the fuck have we just done? We came up with this unbelievably powerful enemy and we just have these little shitty runabouts that are impossible to shoot in.' Directors hate shooting on [the run-about set], it's very hard to get angles, the walls aren't large, it's very confining. You can't get movement crossing from one place to another. It's just difficult production work. Plus you have basically two people in a craft. We have to get a ship. So we went to Michael's office."

Ira: "We know VOYAGER is coming and there will be problems, but we need a ship. Doesn't have

**“Our idea was at the end of season seven we find the Founders and Odo is the future king. That was going to be the end of the series.”**

**—Producer Ira Behr—**

to be a ship that's as good as *Voyager*. Doesn't have to be a starship—we need a kick-ass ship."

Piller: "Well, we've been talking about doing a war room."

Behr: "Great, let's get it, but we need a ship."

Piller: "Absolutely, let's talk to Rick."

"There was concern about VOYAGER and it couldn't be like *Voyager*," Behr continued. "And I didn't know what VOYAGER was going to be at the time. I said, 'Fine, let's give it something only DEEP SPACE NINE has. It's all because of the Dominion. That's why the *Defiant* came in. Ron [Moore]—who is the sailor/fighter pilot/astronaut/who-never-was—got all excited at the thought of this. When Robert had the misfortune of going on his honeymoon, and didn't write the first episode [which he was going to do], Ron got to write it. Ron was ecstatic, 'cause he got to play with the *Defiant*."

"In fleshing out Sisko's backstory of being not just an explorer but a builder, a man who doesn't go off on the next mission, but watches something grow, we decided that building [the ship] was a nice element to give to him. That he developed the ship which at the time was too kick-ass for the Federation. That was one of the problems and something we had to discuss. We really wanted this to be a ship that went out there to fight, no science, no searching. This was 'Uh oh, they're bigger than we are and they're coming to get us. Let's ram it down

their throats before they ram it down our throats.' We had to pull back a little on that. Everything has to stay within the Federation and the Federation is not, if you asked Gene Roddenberry, a military organization. We're not the cops of the galaxy. But when you meet people, like the Borg or the Romulans, it does pay to have a ship that can do some damage.

"It's still considered a fighting ship. It was a prototype and they decided for whatever reasons it wasn't going to become the new

Robert Hewett Wolfe, promoted from executive story editor to producer in the fourth season.



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Gratitude Festival on DS9, Lwaxana Troi (Majel Barrett) unwittingly infects the crew with an epidemic of misplaced affections. This episode owes as much to screwball comedies of the '30s as it does to "A Midsummer Night's Dream" as Jake loves Kira, Bareil loves Dax, Dax loves Sisko...you get the idea.

"We thought, 'Who can we steal from that was dead?' And realized Shakespeare has been dead a long time," joked Robert Hewitt Wolfe. "So we decided to steal 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' and do a story about star-crossed lovers where everybody falls in love with the wrong person. That was Jim [Crocker] and Ira [Behr]'s idea. They developed it in the second season, but could never really make it work. In the end, it was Lwaxana Troi going through these hot flashes that got the story to work. We liked it. It's a tradition isn't it? Doesn't every STAR TREK series have one episode where everyone goes a little crazy and falls in love with each other?"

"To me it's like, c'mon, lets have a little sense of humor about the franchise and about ourselves periodically," said Ron Moore. "One of the great things about the original series was that every once in a while they did 'Trouble with Tribbles'—something that was just a romp. If there was one flaw that TNG had was we didn't do nearly enough of that. They were just so straight-laced and stiff. We just didn't have enough fun with the cast. We knew 'Fascination' was going to be a love it or hate it show, but it was also one that we definitely wanted in the mix. Just enjoy it for what it is and don't get too caught up in the tech solution and the hows and whys."

"The thing that was most successful about the show was Colin O'Brien and Keiko [Rosalind Chao]," enthused Behr. "I think it's one of the best, truest relationships in all of STAR TREK. Some of the takes were really, really heavy. They really got into it. It was very touching. People were uncomfortable when we watched it in dailies. The other thing that show did, which became one of the best things about the season, was it really helped Bashir and O'Brien. The best moment was at the end of the show when O'Brien says goodbye to Keiko and he turns around and he holds up his hand and the racket is thrown in his hand. Bashir is still waiting for him. It's friendship. It's something we don't get enough accolades for. Everyone talks about it being a dark show, but I don't see it. I see all the deep relationships."

Several long-time STAR TREK fans have assured me that "Fascination" is by far the worst hour of television in the history of the franchise. I cannot entirely agree. Granted the madcap nature of this cross between "Naked Time" and "This Side of Paradise" is the last thing I tune into STAR TREK for. It's not that I don't like comedies, just that I expect them to be funny, not merely goofy. Even so, I kind of liked the giddy delirium of the story. It is as though the entire station were filled with laughing gas. Much of the credit goes to Avery Brooks' direction. What in lesser hands could have been a complete disaster, Brooks managed to turn into a frothy confection. The actors are properly exacerbated

Kira and O'Brien beam through history to find Sisko and Bashir stranded in the past in "Past Tense, Part II," the show at its best.



Near the end of "Past Tense, Part I," Bashir and Sisko hide out in an alley like two homeless men, on the lam in San Francisco in 2024.

and/or drunken by their confused affections and the pace and over-acting build to a euphoric state culminating in the odd sight of Sisko decking Bareil (Philip Anglim). Brooks even manages to work in a pair of long, intricately choreographed takes through the carnival festivities. The chilling behavior of the O'Briens, however, strikes a jarring note of reality amidst all the levity and may have been better suited for another episode.

#### PAST TENSE: PART I

★★★★

12/31/94. Production Number: 57. Stardate: 48481.2. Teleplay by Robert Hewitt Wolfe. Story by Ira Steven Behr and Robert Hewitt Wolfe. Directed by Reza Badiyi.

A transporter accident sends Sisko, Bashir, and Dax three centuries into earth's past. The trio materialize in San Francisco circa 2024 to find an American civilization sharply divided between haves and have-nots. Apprehended by two police officers, Sisko and Bashir are taken to a sanctuary district—a walled-off camp where the homeless and jobless are segregated from the rest of society. There Sisko learns they are smack dab in the middle of a crucial event in earth history—the Bell Riots. Meanwhile, Dax is rescued by a wealthy software executive and is treated to all the comforts of the upper-crust.

"I really think we should kill this guy."

—The Hat

#### PAST TENSE: PART II

★★★★

1/07/95. Production Number: 58. Stardate: not given. Teleplay by Ira Steve Behr. Story by Ira Steven Behr and Robert Hewitt Wolfe. Directed by Jonathan Frakes.

Trapped in the past, Sisko must adopt the identity of Gabriel Bell, whose selfless acts in an uprising changed the course of human history. As the historic Bell Riots rage on, Dax works to locate Sisko and Bashir as Kira and O'Brien beam through history to find their comrades.

"Past Tense I and II" benefit from big production values as seen in Paramount's nicely redressed back lot streets and the abundance of extras that populate the sanctuary shelter. The two-parter also boasts a strong, angry performance by Brooks and several choice turns by guest stars Bill Smitrovich as Webb, Frank Military as B.C., and Jim Metzler as Chris "The Hat" Brynner. Thank Ira Behr for casting world-weary, everyman faces for these parts. There is even a cameo by Clint Howard (who, coincidentally, was also bald when he played the alien commander in "The Corbomite Maneuver" as a child).

As a two-parter, "Past Tense" suffers a bit from a rambling narrative through-line and some heavy handed sermonizing about the status of the homeless. The narrative weakness comes in the scientific convenience of having the *Defiant* protected from the effects Sisko and company have had on the past. This, of course, gives something for Kira and O'Brien to do (though not much) and allows for the realization that their comrades have, in fact, changed the past (much like the landing party in "City on the Edge of Forever" did when they saw

the *Enterprise* had vanished). More forgivable are the sermons. After all, this is a show with a social message written in capital letters, and what's the use of going back in time if you can't point out how unenlightened your predecessors were. Behr, Wolfe, and Echevarria can be credited for not attempting a quick easy answer to such a complex issue. (For writers comments see article in page 92.)

"He'll die like a man, not a machine."

—Bashir

#### LIFE SUPPORT

★

1/28/95. Production Number: 59. Stardate: not given. Teleplay by Ron Moore. Story by Christian Ford and Roger Soffer. Directed by Reza Badiyi.

Vedek Bareil is seriously injured en route to critical peace negotiations with the Cardassian empire when his shuttle develops a molecular fracture in the plasma conduits (darn, I hate it when that happens). Bashir must use extreme and unorthodox medical techniques to keep him alive to help negotiate the peace treaty. For very different reasons, Kai Winn and Kira plead with Bashir to keep Bareil alive, rather than place him in stasis until he can be properly treated. In doing so, however, Bashir is faced with the moral dilemma of extending a life by artificial and ultimately dehumanizing means. Meanwhile, Jake and Nog (Aron Eisenberg) go on a double-date.



Phillip Anglim as Bajoran Vedek Bareil gives up his life to complete crucial negotiations with the Cardassians in "Life Support."

And you thought "Fascination" was bad? "Life Support" has it beat hands down. The subject matter is relevant enough: at what point does modern medicine call it quits and let a person die? The trouble here, as is often the case with DS9, is in the execution—there is precious little dramatic tension in any of these scenes. The moral dilemma Bashir is placed in is a non sequitur. As chief medical officer, he could do whatever he wants to with Bareil, negotiations be damned. I would rather have seen a Bajoran doctor conduct these radical efforts and place Bashir in the position of arguing for a respectful, human death. At least he would have shown a little backbone in such a situation and Siddig El Fadil's best moments are when Bashir takes a firm moral stand. As it is, the episode verges on maudlin parody as Bareil falls apart piece by piece. I half expected to find his brain stem floating in a stasis tank by act five with Bashir yelling, "I can save him. It's just a flesh wound!" But no, they expect us to take this seriously.

This is to say nothing of the hasty and implausible peace treaty, and Bareil's crucial involvement in it (I would hope Bajor could field a better team than Bareil and Kai Winn). This rationale for Bareil's selfless act is hard to identify or sympathize with. Why not postpone the negotiations? Cardassia isn't going anywhere. Give it a rest and come back in six weeks or six months. And then there is the B story: there are literally comedic moments that are cut right up against scenes of Bareil writhing in pain.

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# STAR TREK DEEP SPACE NINE

## CHANGELING MORPHS

*Glenn Neufeld and Gary Hutzel supervise the complex CGI and blue-screen metamorphoses.*

*By Dale Kutzera*

Among the station shots, wormholes and space battles see each week on DS9, there may be no more challenging special effect than the articulated goo of Constable Odo and his fellow changelings. The standard process typically involves action plates, background plates, blue-screen photography, and computer animation, all seamlessly wedded together to create a few seconds of



The Founders emerge from a pool of goo in "The Search, Part I." Inset: Changelings Salome Jens and Odo in ecstasy.



sci-fi magic. For effects supervisors Glenn Neufeld and Gary Hutzel, and their respective coordinators David Takemura and Judy Elkins, however, there are very few standard effects.

Take for instance, the dramatic revelation at the end of third season's opener "The Search," where another changeling rises from a lake of goo, and coalesces into a humanoid shape as she walks toward a stunned Odo and Kira. The sequence, designed by Gary Hutzel was one of the most elaborate ever attempted with morphing effects.

Neufeld described the tricky procedure used to achieve the shot. "Gary [Hutzel] rehearsed [actress Salome Jens] on the set walking through with the scene with the

camera operator following her," said Neufeld. "We shot those and recorded the information, then did one shot without her in the scene where the operator gave his best guess on what he thought the pan was like. We had everybody's eye lines moving to track where she was supposed to be. That's the plate we used for the shot."

Using the first take with Salome Jens as a reference shot, Hutzel then repeated the camera movement with Salome against a blue screen. Normally in such cases where repeated camera movement is critical, a full motion-control system would have been used on both shots. For expedience and budgetary reasons, a specially designed camera mount was used for the background plate that only recorded pan and tilt information. The camera operator had to make his best guess on the pace of the actual camera movement. To help match the two sequences thick tape marks were made on the floor of the blue screen stage for the actress to feel as she walked over them. In addition, the pace of her steps was counted out on the audio track of the first shot. When the shot

was played back for reference on the blue-screen stage, the actress simply had to pace her stride to hit the tape marks right on the counted beats.

First the blue-screened image of the actress was composited over the background plate. Then the plate, the matte, the composite, and the blue-screen elements were handed to the computer animators at Vision Arts. The changeling has three components, the specially designed animation of the changeling goo, the 3D CGI model created from an actual laser scan of the actress in costume, and the live-action elements. The process of combining the elements into one continuous trans-

formation involved blending the computer-generated material with live-action footage in a combination warp and dissolve known as a morph.

"The animators went in and changed the generic wire frame model so that it begins as a spout of liquid low in frame, rises up and becomes wider and wider, and finally meshes into her skeleton 3D wire frame at the dissolve point. They rendered all of that so she is Odo goo and has blobbies moving around, then she walks through the frame that culminates in her 3D wire frame which has all her surface details as a liquid morph. The final step was the animator's cross-dissolve from the plate with the CGI composited on it to the plate with [Jens] on it as the 3D block achieves her 3D shape. So the last second and a half she is in her shape and cross-dissolves, becomes herself, comes to a stop and looks up into Odo's eyes and says, 'We've been waiting for you.'"

In the second part of "The Search," which Neufeld supervised, Odo and the female Changeling merge in an erotic embrace of goo. To ensure the sequence car-





Glenn Neufeld watches a rough version of the computer-generated Odo effects on his monitor for "The Adversary." Right: Working with the live-action plate sans morph.

ried the emotional weight the story intended, and didn't just appear as a tower of goo, Neufeld worked with director Jonathan Frakes, Rene Auberjonois and Jens to choreograph an appropriate action. "When it starts, Odo doesn't know what it is or what might happen to him," said Neufeld. "But he's overcome with the desire to do it so for him it would be akin to a person making love for the first time. We asked the actors if they could give us versions of what we were trying to get at. Rene initially made a joke and danced with Salome for a moment. He took her in his arms and held his hand out and she took his hand. I said, 'Do that again and put your palms together.' That gave us the opportunity to do the beginning of the morph on their hands. Then it all came together. We turned their arms into a single pseudo-pod, then we had them lean their heads against each other."

Once those plates were shot, the sequence was by and large determined. There is seldom if ever a chance to go back, bring in the actor, rebuild the sets and re-shoot the sequence. Neufeld and his coordinator David Takemura must keep track of the scores of details and elements so that days or weeks later they will be able to assemble the shot in an editing bay or replicate a move on a blue-screen stage. "What I have is a huge spreadsheet that describes everything I need to finish," said Neufeld. "Then I pare the spreadsheet down to what the assistant director needs to know, what the prop men need to know, and what the director of photography needs to know about each shot on the set. I give each of them a customized copy of what's going to happen so if I should drop dead during the shoot they can turn to the shot column and see what they need for the shot: 'shoot both actors for reference,' or 'shoot background actors only for action,' or 'shoot background actor repeating action with tracking pad grid on his stomach.'"

Neufeld and Hutzel, who alternate episodes (Neufeld takes the even numbered shows), are on the set whenever an effects sequence is being filmed. As they note the angles the director has chosen and how a given effects shot will be edited into the shots around it, their effects coordinators will note the specifics of lighting, camera position, and lens used. By doing so, elements of the shot can be replicated on a blue-screen stage.

### 31 MORPHS?

The complexity of the average morphing shot was increased by a factor of ten for the third season's closing episode "The Adversary," in which Odo and an enemy Changeling battle it out in the *Defiant's* engine room. Neufeld could hardly believe what he read in the script. Shots in which separate elements must appear to interact with one another are the most difficult to pull off. *TERMINATOR II* had a year to perform similar effects. The visual effects team had only six weeks.

"Initially, when they finally confront each other at the end they turn into amorphous blobs and start struggling with each other," said Neufeld. "It's difficult to get a clear picture on what they look like. All the times we've done morphs where they become shapeless or blobs it's never been liked or accepted by the producers. I think it was Rick Berman who said, 'What are they going to do, just squish around each other? How do we know they are fighting and not making love?' We know it doesn't look as though they have purpose to what they are doing. So we got together with the writers and tried to give them ideas about things that could make clear what the intent was between the characters."

At times, Neufeld would happen to meet

**“These are the most difficult kind of effects you see in blue screen where two people are intertwined physically, and allowed to move.”**

—Glenn Neufeld, *Effects*—

producer Ira Behr between their adjacent buildings on the Paramount lot and conduct involved discussions on the street about pseudo-pods, blobbies, and Odo goo. "I approached it from an anthropomorphic standpoint," said Neufeld. "When people are

fighting, it's real obvious because they are striking each other. There's got to be some kind of punching or fastening on to each other and struggling in a way that shows somebody is winning and somebody is losing."

Behr suggested that one Changeling stick his hand into the guts of the other. The viewer wouldn't see what was happening, but the victim's expression would convey that it wasn't pleasant. Neufeld eventually went with director Alexander Singer to the engine room set, asked the carpenters to leave for half an hour, and the two of them then roughly blocked out the scene. As two stunt people acted out the battle, Neufeld would occasionally stop the action and ask Singer what angles would capture a given action or piece of dialogue, and where cuts would be.

From this exercise, Neufeld was able to sketch out a rough sequence of shots, and then determine which would involve effects. To Neufeld's surprise, the producers didn't bat an eye at the "radically over pattern" budget he submitted to create the 31 morphs the episode required, each ranging from three to ten seconds. A flat rate for the show was then negotiated between producer Peter Lauritson and Vision Arts.

Behr's gut-twisting shot proved particularly tricky. Not only where the two separately filmed characters are supposed to interact, with the evil Changeling ramming his arm into Odo's stomach, but Odo would be writhing in agony. "These are the toughest kinds of effects you see in blue screen, where two people are intertwined physically, and are allowed to move," said Neufeld. "One person must be blue-screened so we can over-extend his reach and cut the tail of his hand off at the point where it is sticking through Odo's body. The problem is getting them to track with each other. If somebody

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"Tell me about it," admitted Behr. "I know it's hard to believe, but we never figured that out until we saw the rough cut of the show. In retrospect, if I had to do it all over again, I probably would not have done it that way. The B-story had no business with that A-story."

"The original story document had a Federation ambassador, who was negotiating peace with the Romulans and the elimination of the neutral zone, come aboard the station," said Ron Moore. "And the same things happen: he dies on the table, Bashir brings him back to life and then it became his gradual descent into madness—Frankenstein frankly. But as we were breaking the show, I started to feel that it was a big 'so what?' As much as you tried to say this was Bashir's show, the guy whose life was at the center was this guest star and that peace with the Romulans was just not something we really cared about. But if this guy was Bareil and they are negotiating peace with Cardassia, then you've got Kira involved and it brings so much more to it. We were going to take it even further; in the initial draft we were going to put Bareil's brain in an android body. So by the end of the episode he was Frankenstein the monster, but I think Rick [Berman] felt that was taking it too far."

"You can also lay the B-story at my doorstep. The show was going to be so unrelentingly grim, such a downer, that I felt it needed a light B-story. In the end, it was probably a mistake. I think they were two good stories that didn't belong in the same episode. There are literally shots where you are going from Jake and Nog having a wacky time to Bareil screaming in agony. It's a little too jarring."

At least the episode disposes of Philip Anglim's rather vacuous Vedek Bareil. "I just felt that no one was dying to do a Bareil show," Behr added. "We never got letters from fans saying 'We love Bareil.' Now that he's dead we are getting that kind of mail, but up until then no one was losing sleep over Bareil. It just wasn't clicking. We were finding these nice levels for so many of our people and this Bareil relationship, which should have been deepening the Kira character, did not seem to be fulfilling that requirement."

The only saving grace after five acts of torture is a tender scene with Kira as she says good-bye to Bareil. Nana Visitor manages to find an interesting spin to put on any line this season and her closing words are particularly well written.

## HEART OF STONE

★1/2

2/04/95. Production Number: 60. Stardate: 48481.2. Written by Ira Steven Behr and Robert Hewitt Wolf. Directed by Alexander Singer.

While searching for a Maquis fugitive, Kira is caught in a growing crystalline formation that gradually envelops her body. As the odd formation is about to take Kira's life, Odo must express his hidden feelings for her. Meanwhile, back on the station, Nog decides he wants to be in Starfleet.

After an expensive season opener, the costly "Past Tense," and to save money for elaborate episodes to come, "Heart of Stone" joins "Life Sup-

**Cardassian scientist Gilora (Tracy Scoggins) interprets O'Brien's rudeness as affection in "Destiny," saving the wormhole from collapse.**



Odo watches helplessly as Kira is slowly enveloped by a growing crystal in "Heart of Stone," a changeling plot to test his loyalty.

port" as a pair of inexpensive, self-contained shows. Almost the entire episode plays out in the ubiquitous cave set as Odo labors to free Kira from this strange crystal. Rene Auberjonois works wonders beneath that layer of latex he wears, but, as with almost every heartfelt scene on DS9, this can't be real. It's either a dream sequence, a Cardassian plot, a hallucinogenic virus or, as in this case, a changeling trick. Therein lies the other major problem with "Heart of Stone"—the premise that the changeling would go to such extremes for the unlikely reason of causing Odo to leave. To believe this we have to accept that the changeling thinks Odo loves Kira *and* that this love is the only thing holding Odo to DS9. I don't buy it.

It's hard to imagine two such weak episodes coming back-to-back, but "Heart of Stone" is almost as relentlessly pedantic as "Life Support." Where we spend five acts watching Bareil turn into a vegetable last week, we spend five acts watching Kira turn into a pillar of salt this week. At least the B story involving Nog is appealing, as the earnest Ferengi struggles to impress Sisko, and Rom finally stands up to Quark.

"I think it's a classic story," said Behr. "If there is anyone who would be blind to the affection Odo feels it would be Kira who is so direct. She doesn't understand someone not being more up front about it, and Odo it obviously conflicted on a lot of levels. He was obviously in such pain to say 'I love you.' It was like ripping out his guts to admit it, even though she was dying. The funny thing about that episode is that the fans just went nuts about Nog joining Starfleet. They're for it. Put the Ferengi in Starfleet—on a real simple level that's a real kick to a fan."

**"Three vipers will return once more to the nest."**

—Vedek Yarka

## DESTINY

★★★

2/11/95. Production Number: 61. Stardate: 48481.2. Written by David S. Cohen & Martin A. Winier. Directed by Les Landau.

Sisko ignores an ancient Bajoran prophecy to collaborate with the Cardassians in establishing a communications relay in the Gamma Quadrant. Warned by a fanatical Vedek Yarka (Erick Avari) that this could fulfill the prophecy and destroy the wormhole, Sisko begins to reconsider his role as Emissary. The story was developed in the second season, but didn't get off the ground until the elements involving the Cardassian communications link was added. The presence of the three Cardassian scientists, Gilora (Tracy Scoggins), Ulani (Wendy Robie), and Dejar (Jessica Hendra) also add some interesting comedy relief as Gilora interprets O'Brien's rude behavior as a sign of affection.

Oddly enough, the use of the prophecy was originally intended to be one of good news. When the freelance writing team couldn't make it work, the staff turned it into a prophecy of doom that is misinterpreted. "It was structurally impossible to make it work," said Rene Echevarria, "and I think it was Ron who said, 'What if it was a prophecy of doom.' I think the three of us broke that—Ira wasn't around—and saw what they were going for and

went with it, saving the twist that it was a prophecy of good tidings for the end. It was a good show for the franchise. Sisko as Emissary was something we had not touched on in a long time."

**"If they want their money back. Give it to them."**

—New rule of Acquisition

## PROPHET MOTIVE

★★

2/18/95. Production Number: 62. Stardate: 48481.2. Written by Ira Steven Behr and Robert Hewitt Wolfe. Directed by Rene Auberjonois.

When the Ferengi Grand Nagus (Wallace Shawn) suddenly decides to abolish his race's profit-driven beliefs, Quark is resolved to "cure" his apparently ailing leader. He and Rom learn that the Nagus' strange behavior, and the newly rewritten Rules of Acquisition, are in fact a gift from the wormhole aliens. The only hope for the Ferengi race, Quark reasons, is to take the Nagus back to the wormhole and return the "gift."

"Michael Piller always said if we ever see the prophets again the person who should see them would be Quark," said Wolfe, "because it would be as different as possible from Sisko seeing them. It was something completely different about the prophets, but still keeping them true to who they were. Ira always wanted to do a TAXI episode where Louie meets his uncle who he has always modeled his life after, and the uncle had been born again and was this wonderful human being. Louie spent the whole episode trying make his uncle turn back into this other person. That's what we did, only with Quark."



The three stooges: Rom and Quark are aghast when the Grand Nagus (Wallace Shawn) rewrites the Rules of Acquisition in "Prophet Motive."

"I know some of the fans don't like some of the 'less-serious' episodes like 'Prophet Motive,' and 'Fascination,' and I understand where they are coming from, but humor has always been part of the STAR TREK universe. I really think it's nice to be able to do these episodes. People remember 'Trouble with Tribbles,' and they had their own little funny theme music."

"You're either on the bus or off the bus with this kind of stuff," admitted Behr. "I thought it came out well. The whole idea of a kinder, gentler Ferengi is an interesting thing and it also sets up something we play off in a later episode—that Quark is a traditionalist. He's fighting to retain the old values in the face of the Federation which seems too bland everyone out. It's a dangerous thing to him."

Please let me off this bus. I've said it before that an episode full of Ferengis is hard to take, but that's not to say there is no place for comedy on STAR TREK. The comedy just has to be funny. "Prophet Motive" is simply not very funny. It tries hard to be a kind of Marx Brothers farce, and certainly the actors involved are up to the task, but the story lacks drive and substitutes obnoxious arguments for genuine comedy writing. One would think Rene Auberjonois' extensive theatrical experience would be a benefit in directing this genre, but this isn't the case.

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# STAR TREK DEEP SPACE NINE

## KLINGON REFUGEE

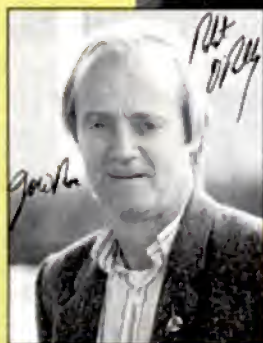
*Robert O'Reilly on playing Gowron, commander of Klingon's High Council, joining Worf on DS9.*

*By William Wilson  
Goodson Jr.*

Robert O'Reilly, who plays Gowron, commander of the Klingon High Council, is just one of the many actors, Michael Dorn being the latest, who have moved their STAR TREK roles from THE NEXT GENERATION to DEEP SPACE NINE. At many fan conventions around the country formal reviews of Klingon troops have been held in O'Reilly's (THE MASK) honor. Fans portraying the war-like aliens are normally in full makeup and uniforms, but the most believable Klingon of them all is the actor, who in slacks and a sports shirt, with no makeup becomes the recurring Klingon.

How does he do it? He's an actor. As he put it, "We are humans playing aliens. Myself, I use a lower part of my voice and there are little tricks that I use that I've found over time work, like with my eyes and such to give it more of an alien quality. But it's me doing it."

O'Reilly rolled his eyes and growled as Gowron in four NEXT GENERATION episodes: "Reunion," "Redemption I & II," and "Rightful Heir." He saw Gowron move over to DEEP SPACE NINE in third season's "House of Quark" and fourth season's opener "The Way of the Warrior," in which Michael Dorn as Worf joined the cast. The actor has also appeared in a Hallmark commercial touting a model Klingon ship. O'Reilly got the part after being summoned to an audition. He had played a small role as a holodeck gangster called Scarface in THE NEXT GENERATION second season episode "Manhunt." This time he was asked



O'Reilly as Gowron, a recurring role born on THE NEXT GENERATION, actually preceded Worf's posting on DS9 by appearing in third season's "House of Quark." Inset: Sans makeup.

to read for Jonathan Frakes, who was directing the episode "Reunion."

As O'Reilly remembered it, "I'm an old STAR TREK fan from the original series [and] my favorite characters are always the Klingons, so it's sort of a hoot for me to be auditioning for a Klingon. If you had asked me what I would like to do, that's exactly what I would have wanted to do. [In] the script one scene was very analytical, almost Machiavellian, and I made a decision to go with that type of reading, to make him

thoughtful and insightful. The next scene was a typical Klingon scene, shouting and yelling, making threats. [After] the first scene I thought I might have lost them, the auditioners, but the next scene I had planned to do very, very Klingonese, very strong. Basically, what I was doing was showing two sides to the character, that he was a Klingon, but becoming a leader and staying a leader is not easy. I think you have to be Machiavellian and they, the writers, have developed that."

O'Reilly discovered that he and Frakes were "very sympatico in terms of who Gowron was, how to play him. He was a mystery person in the opening episode."

The logistics of being a Klingon include, of course, the elaborate makeup. O'Reilly enjoys regaling fans about how Michael Dorn wears size 14 shoes, and since he set the mold for Klingons on the new STAR TREK every other portrayer of Klingons has to learn to walk in size 14s.

The makeup takes about three hours to apply, so O'Reilly usually has to arrive about four a.m. If two makeup people are assigned to him it can take less than two hours, but he still needs time for the elaborate costuming. Because of the hair pieces, O'Reilly

needs a dresser, who also helps with the heavy 20-pound cape which marks Gowron as a Klingon leader. O'Reilly has clear memories of Patrick Stewart's difficulties in holding the robe at arm's length over Gowron's shoulders for several shots in "Redemption."

The makeup people never had to make a mold of him, but simply measured his head by eye and used one of the standard skull molds to model his ridges on. O'Reilly did have to have a dental mold made for them



O'Reilly as Gowron counsels Worf (Michael Dorn) on his mission on DS9 as the station's liaison to the Klingon Empire in fourth season's opener "The Way of the Warrior," using TNG to boost the ratings.

to construct his artificial teeth.

Another part of being a Klingon is the language. Klingonese is an actual language which each actor must speak to the satisfaction of the hundreds of fans who are now learning it from books or correspondence courses. O'Reilly not only listened to earlier programs and practiced with Michael Dorn, but was given the home number of linguist Marc Okrand. "I was a little nervous not having gone to the Klingon University," he quipped. Okrand constructed Klingonese for STAR TREK III: THE SEARCH FOR SPOCK from the snippets heard in the first STAR TREK movie. He became a friend, coaching O'Reilly over the phone. O'Reilly noted that with the artificial teeth some Klingon syllables are almost impossible to say without spraying the other actors.

A problem faced by many actors in STAR TREK is its technobabble, trying to remember long, meaningless but technical sounding phrases. O'Reilly has not had any problem with this because "I don't get lines like that. The typical thing for my career has been doing bad guys and very heavy character acting, and one of the beauties of it is, we don't get exposition. We have lines like, 'I am going to kill you.' If you watch Klingons, we rarely have the [technobabble] in our dialogues, which is a great relief."

Gowron has had two major on-screen duels, killing an unnamed challenger in "Redemption" and defeating Kahless (Kevin Conway) a clone of the legendary first emperor of the Klingon empire in "Rightful Heir." Staging a fight, however simple, for film is always difficult. "I have done a lot of theatre combat," said O'Reilly. "I have done broadsword. I have done knife, so the basics are there for me. The

first one was a fairly short fight and I think I did a lot of that myself. The second one with Kahless was a much more complex fight; they brought me [in] for a couple of fight rehearsals, which is great because most TV shows don't do that. It helps the actors a lot to have a couple of days to work on the moves."

Stunt coordinator Dennis Madalone (THE GREATEST AMERICAN HERO) blocks out each fight. First two stunt men do the fight, then the actors do it, in segments, and finally each actor does the routine with a stuntman. The scene is then edited using the stuntmen for longer shots and pictures of the actors for closeups.

Rehearsal time is always limited in television work. On his STAR TREK appearances, O'Reilly usually received a script two to three days before the seven days of shooting started. Having been in over 100 TV episodes, he has become used to working with one or two short run-throughs. "I am not a big one for over rehearsing," he said. "It's not like the theatre where scenes can run over ten minutes. Basically they're two or three minute scenes. Sometimes they run longer, but then there are usually more people in the scene."

O'Reilly enjoys the Gowron character and would be pleased to play him again in DEEP SPACE NINE. He was somewhat surprised at the recognition this one TV part has gained him. During his first performance as the Klingon commander he was told this was going to be a life-changing experience. Since then he has not only gotten used to being recognized by dedicated fans of the Roddenberry universe, but now regularly appears at conventions around the world. □

**“We had to pay for ‘Past Tense’ and start saving money. We take a couple of interesting characters and stick them in a room.”**

**—Producer Robert Hewitt Wolfe—**

class of ships. Again it was only DEEP SPACE NINE that was going to have that ship which was what we really wanted—something that helps the DEEP SPACE NINE identity. Just like we had to make the Gamma Quadrant more than just empty space. That's all I really care about. It's all the staff cares about. To help maintain DEEP SPACE NINE as a separate, clear, understandable piece of the STAR TREK puzzle."

Noted Wolfe, "The perception among some of the fans may be that the *Defiant* was an attempt to do more shows like TNG. The truth of the matter is the *Defiant* was an attempt to correct a deficiency in the runabouts. The problem was the runabouts as a set were very difficult places to stage scenes of more than two or three people. They were really limited. They didn't have any corridors, there weren't transporter rooms, there weren't enough things to support a show based entirely off the station. We always wanted to explore the Gamma Quadrant. We did that in the second season in a show called 'Shadowplay.' We didn't have the *Defiant* then and we did a story entirely on this other planet, but it was tough because we couldn't go back to the runabout. It wasn't that we have to be like NEXT GEN. We were doing those kinds of stories on DS9 anyway. We just wanted to do what we do better and a ship will help us do that."

#### A BAD PATCH

"The Search" was followed third season by a series of strong, confidently told stories including "House of Quark," "Second Skin," "The Abandoned," and "Civil Defense." Less successful were the Dax-rejects-symbiont episode "Equilibrium" and the reinterpretation of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, "Fascination." The middle part of the season (what Rene Echevarria refers to as "a bad patch") was complicated by the decision to make the ambitious time-travel story "Past Tense" a two-part episode. To fit this into DS9's intricate schedule of first-run and re-run shows (a schedule set by Paramount that the producers can often only scratch their heads over) Mike Krohn's script for "Civil Defense" was rushed into production.

"When 'Past Tense' went from a single episode to a double episode, suddenly the

whole schedule got jumbled and 'Civil Defense' got slammed into production," said Robert Wolfe. "We did a really terrible thing to Mike Krohn, who is a seasoned screenwriter. We had bought this story from Mike and kept saying it wasn't going to be in the first ten episodes. Then we had this stuff fall and told Mike we are going to break your episode and then you're going to write it and you'll have about six days. So Mike came in and was a total trooper and he broke the story in two days and he delivered us a draft in a week and then it was in pre-production. I think we all had a hand in that. At one point Ira and I were in here on a weekend trying to rewrite sections of it. Everybody got involved in that thing, which turned out pretty well."

Noted Echevarria, "All of a sudden two weeks worth of work was out the window and we had to move everything up. After 'Second Skin' came in really great—Robert's first draft was filmed for all intents and purposes—then it was just crisis. From 'Meridian' until 'Defiant' we were just scrambling."

Following the high point of "Past Tense" (see article on page 92) the series entered what Wolfe referred to as the cost-saving portion of the season, with two self-contained "character building" episodes, "Life Support" and "Heart of Stone." The first of these brought to a close the romance between Major Kira and Vedek Bariel, as the hunky priest (Philip Anglim) sacrifices his life for the success of a Bajoran peace treaty with Cardassia. The second explored Odo's unrequited love for Kira.

"We had to pay for 'Past Tense' and start saving money to do other things," said Wolfe. "So 'Heart of Stone' was a conscious attempt to do a kind of show we've always done on DS9, a show like 'Duet' or 'The Wire' where we take a couple of interesting characters and stick them in a room."

Such long-arc storylines have become one of DS9's strengths, despite the frequent temptation to drift into soap-opera melodrama-

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Captain Sisko the family man, grows a beard and does a bit of space sailing with son Jake (Cirroc Lofton) in "Explorers," seeking adventure.



# STAR TREK DEEP SPACE NINE

## SPACE STATION DRESS CODE

*Costume designer Bob Blackman on rethinking Starfleet's uniform.*

By Mark A. Altman

As costume designer for DEEP SPACE NINE, executive producer Rick Berman recruited Bob Blackman, who has designed for THE NEXT GENERATION since third season, one of the few behind-the-camera artists to work on both shows. Berman insisted on new uniforms for the DEEP SPACE NINE crew, rejecting budget-conscious overtures from producer David Livingston, who urged retaining the established Starfleet costumes to save money. To achieve a new look yet remain faithful to the established uniform design, Blackman went through a number of permutations before satisfying Berman and co-executive producer Michael Piller.

"The DS9 look is an interesting reversal on THE NEXT GENERATION," said Blackman. "Starfleet uniforms have a very dignified and ennobling kind of appearance with that vertical, perfectly done, military-esque kind of structure. In DEEP SPACE NINE we've taken it in another direction. It's very utilitarian. It's a cross between a NASA jumpsuit and a mechanic's jumpsuit."

Unlike the closely cropped, tight-fitting uniforms of THE NEXT GENERATION, DEEP SPACE NINE's outfits are far less constraining. "They're very loose fitting and they have T-shirts," said Blackman. "Some people [usually Chief O'Brien] roll up their sleeves so they look like men at work. There's always something broken, so they're always fixing something. THE NEXT GENERATION has a more dignified, prosperous look." Blackman toyed with making the uniforms out of cotton twill but chose wool after making some test suits because cotton doesn't dye as permanently, a requirement to stand up to repeated wash-



Blackman made Starfleet attire on the station more utilitarian, a cross between a NASA jumpsuit and a mechanic's uniform, Brooks as Sisko.



Rene Auberjonois models Blackman's design for Odo, the station's shape-shifting police officer, "shapeless, yet made with strength."

ings.

In addition to designing the Starfleet uniforms, Blackman came up with a costume scheme for the Bajoran military as well as a unique look for Odo, the station's enigmatic security officer. The Bajoran and Odo costumes were the toughest ones to come up with," said Blackman. "We had to find the right balance of anonymity with Odo, making it interesting and still making it shapeless, but yet with strength. That's so contradictory."

Blackman's design for the Bajoran military is in stark contrast to the outfits he designed for Starfleet personnel. "The big issue in the pilot was Bajor, and what to do for the Bajoran military," said Blackman. "They're close-fitting, more so than Starfleet ever was, formalized, close to the neck, collar, letter-sleeved, quilted, very exotic and odd-looking. Ironically, where we always had THE NEXT GENERATION crew being very formal in a way and the visitors looking kind of casual, it's kind of flipped on DEEP SPACE

**“DEEP SPACE NINE is closer to reality. You could put on one of those suits and walk around. There's a lived-in reality to them.”**

—Costumer Bob Blackman—

NINE. Now Starfleet is very casual and those that bump into them tend to have a little bit more formality, certainly Bajor. I'm doing it as a very deliberate choice—sleek, formal in approach, which I hope will be looked upon as peculiar and odd."

One lesson Blackman said he learned from experience on THE NEXT GENERATION is that while form may be more important than function on television, the cast lets you know that function is just as important in the day-to-day shooting. Blackman was hired on TNG third season to make the uniforms designed by William Ware Theiss more comfortable. "Obviously you learn continually by having to go back and fix and fix and fix," said Blackman. "Though the two-piece [third season refit] satisfied more of the personal needs of the cast—less heat, less body odor—I'm not sure that's the answer to making them comfortable. Ultimately, they would prefer to be wearing civilian clothes so they would have individual character choices.

"The cast of DEEP SPACE NINE so far has had no complaints about the uniforms and usually by now we would be hearing something. They seem to be comfortable; they seem to move. There's air going through them. They're lightweight wool gabardine. Wool is actually a wonderful, breathable fabric. They're not lined very much. They have some structure built in, but not much. They're soft shouldered. They don't have big shoulder pads and they don't pinch. None of that stuff is happening anymore. It's a whole other look. We're not doing this superhuman perfect look. DEEP SPACE NINE is closer to reality. You and I could put on one of those suits and walk around. They're still very handsome, but there's great mobility and a lived-in reality to them."

While budgeting concerns have proven a major constraint for Blackman in realizing his designs for STAR TREK, scheduling is an important factor. "You develop stuff very quickly," said Blackman of the usual time between a costume fitting and when it's needed on the stage. "The most time you ever get is seven days on any outfit—and that's luxurious. We work about two to two and one-half days ahead of when they are on camera. That's when we can start the outfit. Once the actors have signed deals and

they've been cast, we can finally measure them. We may already have a sketch. If it's a really bad idea, we'll redraw it real quick. We usually have one to three days before the principal guest stars start working. What you learn is quick techniques on how to do them. You find shorthand ways to make it look complete, complex and pretty damn good. Having done years of THE NEXT GENERATION helps. I don't know what I would have done if I had come in cold off the the street. I think I'd probably be on the ceiling somewhere screaming, 'I can't do it! I can't do it!' Fortunately, I have a remarkable support team who are amazing at addressing challenges in getting the work done."

After the taxing work of creating an all-new wardrobe for the series' pilot, the episodes have been equally challenging for Blackman and his team of clothiers. "We had to manufacture a season's worth of clothing to do the pilot," he said. "During the pilot we had the entire Paramount workroom making Starfleet uniforms as well as our own workroom. Some of these ladies who have sewn the costumes started on the features and then worked on THE NEXT GENERATION. They are hard-working, wonderful people."

Blackman estimated that DEEP SPACE NINE has required about 15% more output from his staff than THE NEXT GENERATION's costume requirements. "They haven't evolved all the areas of the space station so every time they come to a new one, it's always an interesting challenge," said Blackman. "On the Promenade we did a pretty amazing tailor shop for an episode where we pulled a lot of our old stuff together. It's kind of a history of what I've done on STAR TREK hanging on the racks." □

Nana Visitor as Major Kira models Blackman's design for the Bajoran military, a close-fitting, quilted, formal look to contrast with Starfleet.



The scenes are blocked in a very stagey manner, with the actors often shoulder to shoulder playing right to the camera. It's hard to imagine any director salvaging this script, however, which lacks the wit and clever dialogue of Ron Moore's earlier Quark show "House of Quark."

"Who am I to argue with me."

—O'Brien

## VISIONARY

★★★1/2

2/25/95. Production Number: 63. Stardate: 48481.2. Teleplay by Jon Shirley. Story by Ethan H. Calk. Directed by Reza Badiyi.

A techno-accident causes Chief O'Brien to occasionally jump a few hours into the near future. There he witnesses his own death, not to mention the destruction of the entire station and the collapse of the wormhole. The story was contributed by Ethan H. Calk, a high school teacher in Texas. The script is by science fiction and cyberpunk novelist Jon Shirley who wrote a draft of THE CROW feature film.

"If you're gonna do those kinds of shows, the character it's most fun to do them with is O'Brien, because he's so human," said Behr. "He's as close to an everyman hero that STAR TREK has had. Events can get away from him and you see him trying to stay on top of everything."



A techno-accident causes Chief O'Brien (Colm Meaney) to jump a few hours into the future and see his own death in "Visionary."

Here DS9 returns to the more traditional STAR TREK fare of a compelling science fiction, what-if premise that is exploited to the fullest. Not only does the premise place one of our heroes in jeopardy, but it compounds on itself so that the jeopardy becomes cataclysmic. The twist on time-travel, perhaps the only variation on this theme STAR TREK hasn't done yet, keeps us guessing and provides some witty moments as one O'Brien speaks to another, or one yells at Bashir for letting another die (Bashir taking this without batting an eye). And finally, Colm Meaney's O'Brien is, as Behr said, the perfect Joe-six-pack for such bizarre circumstances.

"It's not the station he's sabotaging. It's my mind."

—Bashir

## DISTANT VOICES

★★★

4/08/95. Production Number: 64. Stardate: 48481.2. Teleplay by Ira Steven Behr & Robert Hewitt Wolfe. Story By Joe Menosky. Directed By Alexander Singer

After being attacked by the alien, Altovar (Victor Rivers), Dr. Bashir lapses into a coma during which his subconscious struggles to live. Trapped in an apparently empty station, Bashir soon realizes that the setting is a dream and he has attributed aspects of his personality to members of the cast. As they are killed off one by one by the alien, Bashir's subconscious self ages to 100 as his life drains away.

Based on a story by Italy-based Joe Menosky, whom the writers kept in touch with by fax and



Bashir (Siddig El Fadil) gets attacked by Altovar (Victor Rivers), a belligerent alien in "Distant Voices," and lapses into a coma.

phone, "Distant Voices," boasts a strong performance by Siddig El Fadil, and the best old-age makeup I've ever seen on STAR TREK. Where foam latex appliances often give an actor a puffy mask-like appearance, here Michael Westmore's makeup seems to have realistically hollowed out El Fadil's cheeks and jaw, in contrast to the bulbous nose. "An actor can make or break a performance," said Westmore. "You can put a great makeup on them, but if they don't act right it can look very silly. And Siddig was brilliant. The makeup just became a prop in his hands to work with."

El Fadil does indeed give a great performance, appropriately weak and winded as he hobbles around with a broken hip. The workman-like script by Behr and Wolfe goes a long way toward making a bottle show seem less like a bottle show (though the tennis match on the promenade was a bit of a stretch). "We tend to work together on and off a lot," said Wolfe of his writing partnership with Behr. "Toward the end of the year we got a little behind and together we write pretty quickly. We write scripts that don't require as much rewriting as when we write separately."

"I can't let her die. Not again."

—Sisko

## THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS

★★★

4/15/95. Production Number: 66. Stardate: 48481.2. Written by Ira Steven Behr & Robert Hewitt Wolfe. Directed by Winrich Kolbe.

In a parallel universe, Sisko must assume the role of his dead counterpart in order to save the mirror version of his late wife (killed in the Borg attack depicted in the DS9 pilot). In this return visit to the dark, alternate universe discovered by the original series cast in "Mirror Mirror" and rediscovered last season in "Crossover," Sisko is abducted by the alternate O'Brien to aid in the rebellion against the Klingon-Cardassian alliance. Taking on the roll of his swashbuckling counterpart, Sisko must prevent his estranged wife, Jennifer (Felecia M. Bell) from

Sparks fly between the evil Kira and Sisko masquerading as his evil self in "Through the Looking Glass," a follow-up to "Crossover."



helping the evil-Kira.

This follow-up to last season's "Crossover" (itself a follow-up to "Mirror Mirror"), benefits from an intriguing what-if premise that really justifies this return trip to the dark side. The alternate Sisko has been killed, but only Sisko can talk his estranged wife out of collaborating with evil-Kira. This great premise instantly provides us with a situation in which Sisko must impersonate his swashbuckling counterpart, deal with the shock of seeing his long-dead wife, and basically save the universe. This is fun. Like the original, there is the ever present tension that comes from Sisko masquerading as his evil self. Behr and Wolfe keep things interesting by throwing in some quasi-lesbian overtones for evil-Kira, a brief cameo by Tuvok (Tim Russ), and a passionate relationship between Sisko and a tough, biker-chick, alternate-Dax.

"Ira and I are big fans of CAPTAIN BLOOD and ROBIN HOOD—the great swashbuckler movies," said Wolfe. "When we sat down to write it, we thought if Sisko were to play Errol Flynn, he would have to kiss everybody. I suspect we will see another follow-up."

"You should never tell the same lie twice."

—Garak

## IMPROBABLE CAUSE

★★1/2

4/22/95. Production Number: 65. Stardate: 48481.2. Teleplay by Rene Echevarria. Story by Robert Lederman & David R. Long. Directed by Avery Brooks.

When Garak's shop mysteriously explodes, Odo's investigation stumbles upon a nefarious plot by Enabran Tain (Paul Dooley). It seems Tain is rubbing out his former Obsidian Order cohorts—of which Garak is one—in order to erase any leads to his secret alliance with the Romulan Empire's Tal Shiar. Together, the two forces hope to enter the wormhole and wipe out the changeling Founders.



Odo interrogates a Flaxian perfume peddler about the explosion in Garak's shop in "Improbable Cause," the first of a two-parter.

"Basically, Bob Lederman, who is an editor on the show and who directed "I Borg" came in and pitched the idea that Garak's shop explodes and we find that Garak blew it up himself," said Rene Echevarria. "We thought that was very Garak-like. It was originally a one-part episode and I wrote the first draft as a one-part episode and got all the way to the final scene with Odo and Garak and Tain in the room. I was supposed to somehow get us out of it—that Odo had gotten some information and that Garak had left something with Bashir that would have made the invasion pointless. Michael Piller said, 'This isn't satisfying, why don't you keep going.' And so we did."

"Improbable Cause" benefits from the presence of Garak (Andrew Robinson) and his mentor/nemesis, Tain (Paul Dooley), but really only serves to rehash the uninitiated as to their past relationship (introduced in last season's "The Wire"), the secret Obsidian Order fleet (an element in this season's "The Defiant"), and Odo's relationship with the Founders



Odo suspects Paul Dooley as Enabran Tain (I) as the Obsidian Order seeks to eliminate Garak (Andrew Robinson) in "Improbable Cause."

(introduced in "The Search"). Perhaps this is the price of long-arc storylines: the need to explain them to new viewers through slow, expository dialogue. "Those are the hardest types of scenes to write," said Echevarria. "It's a delicate balance in any television show to write something new viewers can watch and something your loyal viewers can enjoy. And the STAR TREK series are even tougher."

Particularly grating are a labored interrogation of a Flaxian perfume peddler by Odo, a pointless farewell between Garak and Bashir, a long, dull scene between Odo and Garak in a Runabout, and the chit-chat between Garak and Tain. Few, if any of these scenes move the story forward. In short, "Improbable Cause" is one long piece of exposition and, to quote Odo, "Frankly, I find little of this interesting."

"After today, the only real threat to us from the Alpha Quadrant are the Klingons and the Federation."

—Changeling

### THE DIE IS CAST ★★1/2

4/29/95. Production Number: 67. Stardate: 48481.2. Written by Ronald D. Moore. Directed by David Livingston

Enabran Tain and Garak charge into the Gamma Quadrant with the combined power of the Cardassian and Romulan fleets. As Garak attempts to torture information from Odo, Sisko ignores Starfleet orders and takes the *Defiant* into the wormhole to rescue the Constable.

If "Improbable Cause" was one long act one, then "Die" serves as an extended climax. There is a lot of visceral impact to this episode, most obviously in the epic space battle in acts four and five, but also in a painful torture scene in which Odo peels and flakes, and such little details as a message from Starfleet headquarters lit by a setting sun. But there is also a lot of fluff and padding here in the form of

Garak tortures Odo for information in "The Die Is Cast," the exciting but padded climax to the story begun in "Improbable Cause."



extended talks between Garak and Odo, and a puzzling ruse by Lt. Cmdr. Eddington (Kenneth Marshall) who first acts as a saboteur, then as a loyal part of Sisko's team. Who is this guy and where has he been for the last 20 episodes?

Even more puzzling is Sisko's immediate refutation of Starfleet orders. Would he really risk his ship and his crew to rescue Odo? Perhaps. But leaving DS9 and Bajor defenseless is downright irresponsible. I guess anything can be justified when it results in action-packed scenes of the *Defiant* blasting through Jem'Hadar ships. Cut the fat out of this flabby two-parter and you would have one great episode.

"I can't believe I'm getting advice about women from my son."

—Sisko

### EXPLORERS ★★★

5/06/95. Production Number: 68. Stardate: 48481.2. Teleplay by Rene Echevarria. Story by Hilary J. Bader. Directed by Cliff Bole.

Sisko decides to build a replica of an ancient Bajoran space-faring sailing ship to prove Bajorans may have ventured all the way to Cardassia Prime hundreds of years ago. Back on the station, Dr. Bashir faces his medical school rival.



Sisko builds a replica of an ancient Bajoran space-sailing vessel, grows a beard, and takes Jake off to bond together in "Explorers."

"It was a pitch that Hilary Bader came in with," said Echevarria. "She didn't pitch the sailing ship, but saw it as a rickety old craft. I thought, why not a space sailboat? We could have done it earlier in the season, but we put it off to build the *Defiant*. It wasn't a good time to ask for another new ship. In a way I wish we had done it earlier, because it was a good show for Sisko. He came off as a likeable, interesting, quirky guy who would do something like this—building the ship in the old-fashioned way."

This variation on the voyage of the *Kon-Tiki* does go a long way to solidifying Sisko as a builder and adventurer. In taking this sailing ship (a very graceful design by Jim Martin) on this journey, he is given a chance to bond with Jake, the budding writer. The seeds are also planted for a new romantic interest for the now-bearded Commander. Less successful is the B-story involving Bashir. Like a lot of B-stories, it distracts from the A-story, serving as barely memorable filler scenes.

"Mom's been busy."

—Quark

### FAMILY BUSINESS ★★

5/13/95. Production Number: 69. Stardate: 48481.2. Written by Ira Steven Behr & Robert Hewitt Wolfe. Directed by Rene Auberjonois.

Quark returns to his home planet to confront his mother, who has broken the Ferengi law prohibiting females from earning a profit. That's right, it's the "Quark's Mom" episode and if you like Ferengi schtick, this is the show for you. Here you'll see Quark and Rom (Max Grodenchik) argue about who

"I like stories that embroider on the saga of the station. There are familiar elements the loyal viewer can pick up on weekly."

—Producer Ron Moore—

ma. "By definition, since the station stays there, anything we do can be a continuing problem," said Echevarria. "Anything that goes on with Bejor or Cardassia, or the Dominion—we're there. We just can't go off to meet the new aliens. Part of the franchise is an evolving situation. We are also very conscious of making the show accessible to the first time viewer."

Noted Moore, "I like to do episodes like 'Defiant' and the big two parters because they are stories that are embroidering on the continuing story of the station that keep moving along. I like the fact that it is a continuing saga and there are elements that are familiar to the audience every week that the loyal viewer can pick up on. We are able to walk the line between making it a serial and making it episodic. You can keep doing things that are enriching the over-all fabric of the show and yet that are still accessible to the average viewer. I like the shows that enrich the universe that we're creating here."

Added Wolfe, "There is a lot of collaboration and good team effort on who these people are and the big arcs. The Dominion was definitely a group project. That was something that Ira, Michael, Pete, Jim and I talked about and conceptually worked on as a group. The *Defiant* was the next step up. When Ron and Rene came on we all sat down and talked about it as a group."

"We basically build it piece by piece," said Behr of the long-term storylines. "I think back to early DEEP SPACE NINE and we were trying to find the identity. I told staff I wanted to come up with three alien races for the Gamma Quadrant. We created a whole new society and built it into something."

### ALL GOOD THINGS

Halfway through the third season, Behr took on even more control of the series as co-creator and executive producer Michael Piller stepped down to focus on his new show, *LEGEND* (see article on page 69). While Piller gave notes on the first 17 episodes of the third season, he did no writing, focusing more attention on the successful launching of *VOYAGER*. By episode 22, "Explorers," he had stepped down as executive producer, giving only cursory notes that Behr could accept or ignore.



# STAR TREK DEEP SPACE NINE

## MAKEUP

*Michael Westmore on his Emmy-winning team effort.*

*By Dale Kutzera*

As if the Voyager crew weren't enough, Michael Westmore's makeup effects team was presented with several challenges by the writers of DEEP SPACE NINE, starting with this season's opener "The Search." In it, Constable Odo meets a community of changelings on a mysterious rogue planet in the Omarian nebula. For the non-speaking changelings, Westmore simply used foam latex appliances from the same molds used for Rene Auberjonois' Odo. Westmore specifically requested that actors with faces similar in size to Auberjonois be cast for these parts. For those with speaking parts, molds were taken of their faces and an Odo-like mask was sculpted over it. "It's all one solid piece that glues down around the mouth and eyes," said Westmore. "The problem with that face is it has to line up perfectly with the mouth and eyes. Dean Jones does the makeup [for Odo] and he has it down now to less than 90 minutes. Rene comes in and kind of goes to sleep and Dean wakes him up when it's over with."

In "The Abandoned" Westmore was presented with the challenge of showing the maturation of a fearsome Jem'Hadar warrior from infant to adult. The sequence involved taking a more-or-less human looking infant through the complete adult Jem'Hadar makeup, the leathery skin of which Westmore based on rhinoceros hide. "We had to take a little baby and make



Westmore aged Siddig El Fadli in "Distant Voices" third season.

a little piece for the baby's forehead. Then we had an eight-year-old boy and made a bigger piece and started changing his skin coloring, and then we went with the actor who played the lead and had several changes on him."

It's clear that STAR TREK presents Westmore with every kind of challenge a makeup artist would want to have, from beauty makeup, to aliens and bloody fights ("I stuck a serrated wheel coming out of someone's head one time," he said). Even the challenge of old-age makeup was presented on TNG's "Inner Light" and the third season's DS9 episode "Distant Voices." He credits the success of his work to the performers behind the latex and spirit gum. "It's important that an actor can make or break a performance. You can put a great makeup on them but if they don't act right it looks like a very silly makeup. And Bashir was brilliant. The makeup just becomes a prop in his hands to work with.

"On STAR TREK I get a chance to do absolutely everything I was doing when I was doing features. In fact, the work we turn out here I wouldn't do any differently if I was doing a feature. We have to do it quicker and faster and we don't always have time for tests. If we were doing a feature instead of renting wigs we would have them custom made, but we do scars, cuts, bruises, fantasy, old-age, anything you can imagine—as much or more than many projects nominated for Oscars." □



Westmore's featureless design for Rene Auberjonois as Odo is one of the show's most difficult. Below: A trio of Promenade aliens. Bottom: Applying Quark, supported by a talented team.



their Mom loved more. Then Quark and Mom (Andrea Martin) argue about returning the profits, and then about wearing clothes, and then about his father and how much of a lousy businessman he was. Yep, it's more dysfunctional Ferengi family life than you can imagine.

"I've said it before, the Ferengi offer us a unique and alien culture and yet, in the best of STAR TREK traditions, it's all about us," said Wolfe. "Ferengi is, after all, the Persian word for foreigner, particularly for European. There is a lot of love between those two brothers, it just comes out in a dysfunctional way."

To my ear, "Family Business," like "Prophet Motive," comes across as one long grating argument. It doesn't work as science fiction, because this is really just a family drama. Yet it doesn't work as a family drama, because if you take these actors out of their makeup, the dialogue and situations are sophomoric and two-dimensional. At times, "Family Business" does work on a kind of Marx Brothers, or Three Stooges slapstick comedy level, and there is some inventive fun with the constant nickel-and-diming Quark is subjected to on the Ferengi homeworld. Call me a purist, but I tune in for mind-bending science fiction premises, not Mack Sennett one-reels. The B-story this week involves Sisko's budding romance with a tough freighter captain.



Quark locks horns with mom (Andrea Martin) in "Family Business," as Rom looks on in fear, the dysfunctional family Ferengi-style.

"I've been lied to by Kai Winn for the last time. She wants a fight. I'll give her one."

—Kira

## SHAKAAR

★★1/2

5/20/95. Production Number: 70. Stardate: 48481.2. Written by Gordon Dawson. Directed by Jonathan West.

Kai Winn (Louise Fletcher) asks Kira to convince her former resistance comrades to give up some farm equipment. On Bajor, she becomes reacquainted with the hunky resistance fighter, Shakaar (Duncan Regehr from TNG's "Sub Rosa" episode), and other former war buddies. Convinced that Kai Winn is acting irrationally, Kira sides with Shakaar in refusing to return the farm equipment. Together they take off into the hills, fend off Bajoran cops, and become cult heroes to all of Bajor. Shakaar even decides to run for office, ruining Winn's hopes for world domination. Darn those meddling kids!

And yes, Virginia, there is a B-story. This one involves Chief O'Brien on a winning streak at darts in Quark's bar. "Shakaar" isn't a terrible episode. There is some potential in the camaraderie of old war buddies and in the changes that you discover in once-dear friends (and in yourself) that only come with the perspective of time. There is a bit of "Once more for old time's sake," to the motley band's clunky march through the caves and the hills of Griffith Park. But isn't this much ado about nothing? Couldn't you just replicate more of the farm gadgets? This is, after all, the 24th century?

I do hope that this is the last we've seen of Kai Winn. The writer-producers have, over the half dozen episodes she has appeared in, imbued this



Kira crosses paths again with Kai Winn (Louise Fletcher) in "Shakaar," teaming up again with comrades of the Bajoran resistance movement.

character with a sense of powerful treachery. And yet, there has never been any pay-off. Here she is reduced to quibbling about farm gear. And if she says "my child" one more time, I hope Kira knocks her to the floor and strangles her just like Jack Nicholson did in CUCKOO'S NEST.

"If you don't mind, I would like to borrow your bodies for a few hours."

—Dax

## FACETS

★★

6/10/95. Production number: 71. Stardate: Not Given. Written by Rene Echevarria. Directed by Cliff Bole.

Dax uses the rest of the senior crew as host-bodies when she undergoes a Trill ritual that allows her to confront and question her past selves. The premise for this bottle show allows the cast to play out some rather bizarre personalities, including Quark as a mothering female host, and O'Brien as a timid, bashful host. The story rambles far and wide, however, with no clear indication which direction it is headed. By act three, it appears the show will be about Sisko being possessed by Dax's evil preceding host, Joran. This notion is quickly dropped, however, and in act four the story shifts to the notion that Odo will retain the jovial personality of Curson Dax. This latter development has some great potential as it finally allows Auberjonois' Odo to loosen up and be happy. The B-story here involves Nog's (Aron Eisenberg) preparations for the Academy entrance exam, which are being sabotaged by Quark who opposes his application.

"Facets" was a story Ira wanted to do for years," said Echevarria, who noted that Dax-with-multiple-personality-disorder is an all too frequent pitch from freelancers. "We couldn't get around the fact that we have to find out a deep, dark secret early on in which an old personality comes to the fore. We were stuck and so I flipped that on its head and thought what if there is some weird Trill ritual and she gets people to embody her hosts. That was the springboard and then we got into the notion of what would happen with Joran and decided to pursue that

Odo (Rene Auberjonois) takes on the jovial personality of Curson Dax in "Facets," as Jadzia undergoes a Trill ritual of past lives.



as the major arc of the story, then later we find out about her relationship with Curson.

"We considered moving that story way up and compressing the other hosts. Those scenes ended up getting cut down significantly, but I liked seeing them. I think we kept them short enough that they added a little flavor, and then Joran says 'Your not good enough.' We know that's a great fear of Dax's and that story is resolved with Curson. The plot did not develop until quite late in the story, but hopefully it was interesting. I was pretty happy with it in the end. I thought Teri [Farrell] was immensely likable."

"Someone on this ship is guilty of sabotage."

—Sisko

## THE ADVERSARY

★★★

6/17/95. Production number: 72. Stardates: 48959.1 and 48960.9. Written by Ira Steven Behr & Robert Hewitt Wolfe. Directed by Alexander Singer.

Newly promoted Captain Sisko is sent on a mission to "show the flag" by one Ambassador Krajensky (Lawrence Pressman). When the *Defiant* is sabotaged, however, it is clear that the ship is being used for some other nefarious purpose. When the ambassador is revealed to be a changeling, a ship-wide search is conducted to find him before the *Defiant* causes an intergalactic incident.

"The Adversary" benefits from the solid presence of Pressman, who played Kira's Cardassian "father" earlier this season in "Second Skin." There are also several new *Defiant* sets to explore, and scores of morphing effects, designed by visual effects supervisor Glenn Neufeld and executed by Vision Arts. The plot is very set-bound, however, and doesn't reach the claustrophobic quality of the obvious inspiration for this story, John Carpenter's remake of THE THING. One scene from that film in which the alien is identified by a blood sample, is borrowed in "The Adversary" not once, but twice, as the crew gathers on the bridge to identify the traitor among them, first by taking particle readings, then later by taking blood samples. It would also have been nice to see Sisko take more of an active roll in this, his first outing as captain. While he executes the traditional self-destruct sequence, he spends most of the episode brooding and shaking his head.



The Changelings are everywhere—Odo battles with an enemy imposter in the *Defiant*'s engine room in third season's finale, "Adversary."

"The Adversary" ends with the revelation that the changelings are "everywhere," alluding that they may have infiltrated Starfleet at the highest ranks. "We wanted a show that the Dominion was a really smart organization and they went about things in an intelligent way," said Wolfe. "Making your enemies fight each other is a good thing to do." This will no doubt play a significant roll in DS9's fourth season, which will see the addition of Michael Dorn's Worf to the regular cast, and play up the political relationships between the Federation, the Klingon Empire, and the Dominion.

**“Michael Piller was present less and less third season. February he said, ‘It’s yours,’ even though it meant he took a cut in salary.”**

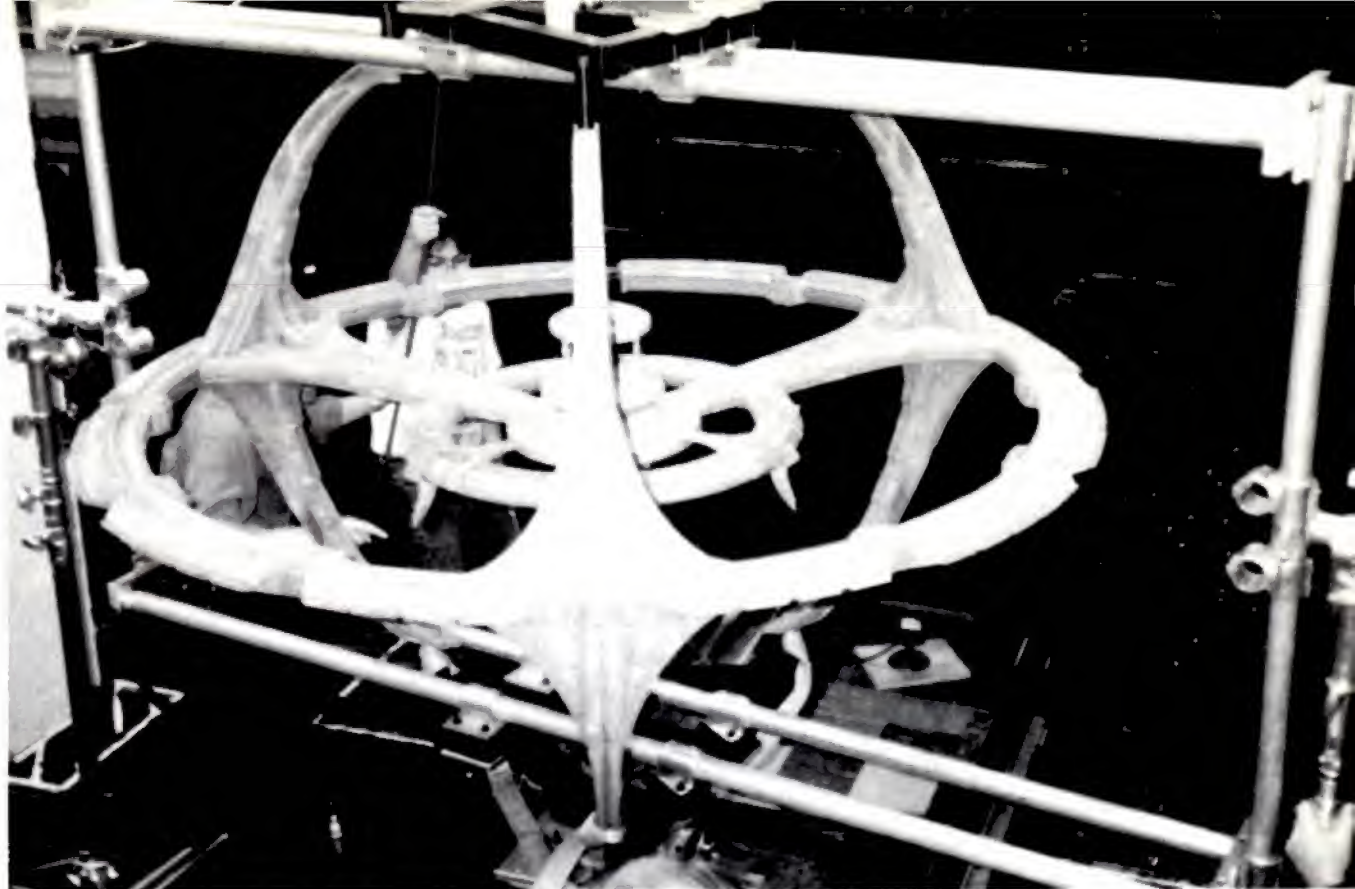
**—Producer Ira Behr—**

“They originally told me he was going to step aside last season and turn it over to me,” said Behr. “That never happened, which was fine. I was pleased it did not happen. Third season he was very up front. He was not going to have much to do with the day-to-day running of the show. He was not going to be at the story breaks, production meetings, or casting. He would come in and listen to the stories when we broke, but he was present less and less as the season went on. At the beginning of February he came to me and said, ‘It’s yours,’ even though it meant he would take a cut in salary.”

Piller stepped down as executive producer, giving Behr full executive producer credit. To ensure a smooth transition to season four, Behr signed a one-year contract with Paramount to continue on the show, but is keeping his options open beyond that. “They wanted a two-year deal, but I gave them a one year deal just because it will be four years and I want to make sure the enthusiasm is still there. Just in terms of the work load. After this year, it will be 96 episodes, so we’ll see what happens after that.”

Behr is a magnanimous boss, encouraging his young staff to experience the full range of production responsibilities, including casting and budgeting. “This is his first gig for most of these kids,” said Behr. “Most of them have never had another job on staff on a TV show. Everyone does contribute on so many levels besides sitting down at the computer, which is obviously the most important thing to do. I like people, regardless of the title and position, to feel it’s their show. They own the god-damn show cause that’s how I’ve always been. When I started out that’s how I was. I wanted to be involved in as many things as I can be—kick me out if you don’t want me there. So I try to keep things very open. Obviously, the final decisions rest with me. I’ll read everything and give notes on everything. I go to

**Rick Berman, Roddenberry’s heir, running the various STAR TREK franchises for Paramount.**



**Mounting the model of the Deep Space Nine station at Image G for motion control filming.**

all casting sessions with the writers. I’ll let Ron handle or oversee the writing on shows when I’m busy doing another show. I go to all the production meetings and the writers of the episode come to all the production meetings where we go through budgets, review what we need, what the props are gonna look like, special effects, costumes, hair, makeup—every production problem you can think of.”

DS9’s third season wrapped up with a typically eclectic mix, ranging from “Family Business” to “The Adversary.” While many still grumble that the station goes nowhere, or the tone is a bit too varied, no one can deny that DS9 has broadened the STAR TREK universe and the variety of science fiction television currently available. It’s success has demonstrated the viability of fantasy and science fiction programming and is in part responsible for the proliferation of genre series, from BABYLON 5 to SLIDERS—each trying to create the same kind of popularity enjoyed by STAR TREK. So far, only THE X-FILES has come close.

“I think with all the different takes on DEEP SPACE NINE, whether it’s successful or not, what it did show was that there is room on TV for another science fiction series, even though it still says STAR TREK on it,” said Behr. “Whenever we feel we’re taking a risk or stepping out of line, we’ll just go back and do a show like ‘Visionary’—a good solid STAR TREK show. There is the 30-year mystique of STAR TREK. Even DEEP SPACE NINE, as different as it is, is in this pocket,

this Gene Roddenberry universe. We suck off this tit as much as any other STAR TREK spinoff. And anything that’s been tinkered with for 30 years is in better shape than shows that are just starting up and creating things out of whole cloth with studio and network interference to boot. We get to cook our own meals on this show. There aren’t these other chefs looking over our shoulder. The buck stops with Rick Berman, Jeri [Taylor], Michael [Piller] and myself.

“Even a show like THE X-FILES went through hell in the beginning and had to fight tooth and nail. Sometimes it works and you survive that, but that’s really hard. A TV series is like a runaway train. If it gets off track it’s almost impossible to get back on. If it begins to fragment and you don’t know where you’re going it’s a horrible feeling—going to work and having a real struggle, a real battle every day. I’ve been on shows like that—network notes, studio notes. We want more of this. Less of this. It can sap whatever creative juice you might have. We get a nice budget and we don’t have any interference from Paramount. That’s the difference.”

#### **LOOKING AHEAD**

“I want to do as creative a mix this year as I think we were able to manage third season, which entails keeping the Dominion alive, deepening the Jem’Hadar, the Founders, and Odo’s relationship to them, deepening Cardassia, finding out new things about Garak, doing some nice, twisty sci-fi classic STAR TREK mysteries, deepening characters. There is so much stuff coming out. Nog has gone to Starfleet. Sisko has been promoted to captain. There are so many elements that we want to play with and find new ones as well. If this season becomes the archetype of a DS9 season, I’d be quite happy.” □

# CITY OF LOS

## Ron Perlman on his storybook role as One

By Dan Persons

It's a peculiar position we Americans hold in European films. We seem to be portrayed less as fellow travelers in this journey called life and more as forces of nature. Not such a bad position to be in when you think about it: check such works as the "Waldorf Salad" episode of *FAULTY TOWERS!* or the films of Tati—and you'll see a vision of Yanks at once blunt, loud, and untamed, yet also blessed with a basic integrity, a forthrightness that the filmmakers tend to view as admirable. You may as well argue honesty with a hurricane, the artists appear to be saying, as question an American on his indomitability. An ambivalent attitude, to be sure, but not without its grace points.

It seems only logical, then, that when Jean-Pierre Jeunet and Marc Caro, previously the directors of the apocalyptic black-comedy *DELICATESSEN*, and now helmers of the mordantly vivid adult fairytale, *THE CITY OF LOST CHILDREN*, needed a lead actor who could portray

Perlman as One, a role in the mode of Vincent from *BEAUTY AND THE BEAST*, a hero pure in heart.



Joseph Lucien as Denree, *One's* baby brother, kidnapped to serve as the subject of nefarious experiments, strapped into a dream-stealing apparatus.

an iron-willed and innocent-souled street busker with an almost instinctual need to protect the young foundling entrusted to his care, they looked not to the wide palette of their own stock company, but to the corps of Americans who have lately made a name for themselves in foreign productions. The actor they ended up with was none other than Ron Perlman, the guy who not only bolstered his genre credentials in such productions as Jean-Jacques Annaud's *QUEST FOR FIRE* and Guillermo del Toro's *CRONOS*, but who had previously won the love of millions for the skill with which he blended poetry and brute force into his portrayal of *BEAUTY AND THE BEAST's* Vincent.

Asked what motivated him to participate in a knockabout fantasy that has his character, known simply as One, battling electronics-assisted Cyclops, Fagin-like Siamese twins, and an opium-addicted flea-circus operator in his quest to rescue the infant orphan Denree from the clutches of a dream-starved mad scientist, Perlman said, "I come

from a comedy background, and I know that when I saw *DELICATESSEN* that that was the funniest film I had seen in years: real slapstick, real visual humor, sometimes very low-brow, sometimes very high-brow, but definitely visual, physical humor. I'm pretty at-home in that milieu. The way you play comedy is as if it's the most serious thing going, so I never felt that I had to make a major adjustment in style."

Where adjustments came was in the uniqueness of this transatlantic partnership. "Usually when you're on a foreign location like that," Perlman noted, "you're with your peers, you're with people who have been hired out of the same country as you. I was not only the only American on the film, I was the only non-French person on the whole movie. Although almost everybody except for Jeunet and Caro spoke perfect English. I had no trouble communicating with the crew, but I was constantly reminded that I was a stranger in a strange land. It was helpful in forming the feelings that I needed to have to play One."

So, who is One? "He's more a physical presence than an intellectual or a verbal one, which is why they were able to use a non-French speaking actor. He doesn't speak that much, and when he does speak, it's awkward and with some sort of a foreign accent. Originally I thought the accent should be as indeterminate as possible, but ultimately we decided that it should be Russian. I think he started out in early drafts as sort of a savant, perhaps like a big kid. By the time we set about filming the final draft, he seemed to have more intelligence. There were still places

where he looked very childish, but one of the things that I suggested is that his childishness came more in the form of him being out of place in this society, being a foreigner and having values that were a throwback to some other, more innocent, more gentle time and place. His desire to just be left alone to raise his little, adopted, three-year-old brother is so out of step with the low price of humanity, and especially of children, in this particular post-apocalyptic place, that that is what is equivalent to him being a savant. It's more innocent with a sort of *RAIN MAN* quality."

One was not the only presence on the *CITY* set who stood out for his uniqueness. As with their prior project, Jeunet and Caro attacked the demands of production in a decidedly unorthodox manner: "They have an interesting way of working," Perlman said. "Marc Caro—who is more of a visual artist than Jean-Pierre Jeunet, who is more of a bona-fide film director—is really responsible for everything visual in the film. When you talk about their films, it's almost like they're putting

# T CHILDREN

for French film fantasists Jeunet and Caro.

oil paintings in every frame: they were experimenting with a new film stock that shoots in one texture and then corrects itself into another to give it a sort-of once-removed quality; the sets, all the optical effects that are employed, that's all Caro's domain. Jean-Pierre Jeunet really handles the on-set stuff, so it's not like you're working with two directors. Although I defer to Caro a lot — because I have a tremendous amount of respect for his eye and his vision; I know how much of himself he poured into this production—Jeunet is the one who's setting up the camera shots, directing the actors, deciding what takes to print. He's more conventionally directing the film.

How was Jeunet to work with? "He's very, very serious. It's as reverential a set as I've ever worked on. Not that it's humorless, but he knows that what he's working on is incredibly ambitious, he knows that he's been developing it for eleven years of his life, so he's pretty set on what he's looking for in each frame, and he's respectful of the professionalism that you bring to it. But you'd better be bringing some—otherwise, you're in trouble.

"Our relationship evolved. We started out total strangers — he started out giving birth to this character and watching it evolve over a number of different drafts. Finally relinquishing control to me was not an easy thing. I came in with a couple of my own ideas. I'm not preferential or possessive about my ideas. I just like to share my ideas with people, and if you can use anything that I see, you're welcome to it. It's not exactly 'tell me exactly what it is you want me to do,' but I'm basically there to get it right, and as far as I'm concerned, right is how the director

**"DELICATESSEN was the funniest film I'd seen in years," said Perlman. "I'm home in Jeunet and Caro's milieu of real slapstick, visual humor."**



Krank (Daniel Emilfork) and clone Dominique Pinon (l), abducting the kids of a harbor town to steal their dreams, but ending up only with nightmares.

sees it, especially directors as brilliant as [Jeunet and Caro]. You don't get a chance to work with people who are that smart that often. At the end of the day I think they liked the take I had on the character, and it became a very, very satisfying collaboration."

Part of that satisfaction may have come from the French approach to production. While the CITY shoot, according to Perl-

man, stretched over a generous six months, it appears few involved felt the strain of the time span: "I've been on a lot tougher [productions]," Perlman noted. "We shot this all in a studio... so this was not so bad. The French schedule is very friendly: you're out at 10:30 a.m., put on a little makeup, at 11:00 everybody sits down to lunch. There's a bottle of wine on every table and a couple of big baguettes; you eat

a five-course, proper meal, and sit around and laugh and have a wonderful time. Then at about 12:30 you arrive on the set, you shoot for about seven hours, and everybody goes home. American productions, you show up at 6:00 a.m. and go home at 10:00 at night and there's a one hour break in between for lunch. So this was not arduous, but it was highly concentrated. Five months of shooting and a month of prep is a luxurious schedule."

Even without the generous amenities, Perlman conceded his good fortune in landing so significant a role: "When you get a chance to play somebody who's that pure and innocent, it's rare. I think you know my career, how varied it is, how sometimes weird and kinky it is. On two occasions, I got to play very spiritual, beautiful characters. One was Vincent, in BEAUTY AND THE BEAST, and the other is One. I'm a terrible judge of my own work. I don't know how well I pull these things off; I can't really watch myself, especially the character of One, where I'm not hidden behind any kind of character makeup, when it's just me. But I certainly am thrilled at the opportunity to play that kind of a guy, in a film of the character of Jeunet and Caro's.

"A few years ago, I realized that the gods up there were taking much better care of me than I could possibly do for myself. The kinds of directors I've gotten to work for, the kinds of tripped-out concepts of the films and TV shows I've been in, I take it as it comes, because it's always more interesting than the way I dreamed it's going to be. I try not to rule anything out. I've been happy that I've taken that attitude; I feel very blessed that I've been asked to some of the parties I've gotten to go to." □

# RUMPELSTILTSKIN

**LEPRECHAUN** director Mark Jones launches a new fairy tale horror series.

By Douglas Eby

RUMPELSTILTSKIN is a horror film from director Mark Jones, who brought you the LEPRECHAUN series, and hopes to strike pay dirt again. Max Grodenchik (Rom on DEEP SPACE NINE) plays the titular monster in makeup designed by Kevin Yagher. Kim Ulrich (ZELIG; SPELLCASTER), plays Shelley, the film's modern-day version of the miller's-daughter-become-queen, a policeman's wife who is widowed by the death of her husband in a shootout with a carjacker, just before the birth of her baby son. Spelling Films International is handling foreign sales and hopes to open the film early in 1996.

According to Jones' fleshing out of the fairy tale, written with co-producer Joe Ruby, Rumpelstiltsken was turned to stone in the 1400s by a gypsy for stealing a baby. Ulrich finds the stone in modern times and makes a wish on it, unknowingly triggering the horror.

"It's an absolute action pursuit," said Jones, "with Rumpelstiltskin going after her to get her baby. While she's running, Ulrich gets tied up with Tommy Blaze as "a sort of Howard Stern or Andrew Dice Clay kind of obnoxious comedian."

Jones researched all the versions of the original fairy tale before fleshing it out and updating it to modern times. "We made it into a story that he needs a baby to get its soul, so he can keep living," said Jones.



Jones on the set with Max Grodenchik as the baby-stealing Rumpelstiltskin.

"It's not a horror movie in the sense of a true horror movie. It's scary—very scary. But what we did was develop a character who is totally unique. Obviously what we wanted to come up with was the next Freddy Krueger or Jason—not to say anything against those characters, which are wonderfully successful. I basically patterned Rumpelstiltskin after Quasimodo, particularly Charles Laughton's 1939 version of THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME—one of my favorite movies—and FRANKENSTEIN.

"The character is also kind of sympathetic. He's stealing a woman's baby—not very sympathetic—but the interesting thing about Rumpelstiltskin, and what Max Grodenchik brought to the table, is for a guy who kills people, he's so single-minded. There's a totally chilling

scene where he even plays with the baby, makes cooing sounds to it, calming it on the way to the graveyard where he'll turn it to stone and take its soul. I think the character becomes so dimensional that audiences will really find him interesting."

Jones experienced a lot of negative media reaction to his first feature project as a director, LEPRECHAUN. "I was destroyed by critics," he said. "All I ever wanted to do with it was make a kids' horror movie. Originally it was going to be PG-13, but Trimark decided that an R market was the way to go, and it did a big boxoffice—over \$20 million. Hardcore horror fans were disappointed because it wasn't really scary. If you look at it as a kids' movie, you're much more forgiving. But I don't want to complain; I'm so happy to be in this business, being able to make movies.

"After that film, I said, 'What else would be a high concept everyone knows about but no one has done?' And I thought of Rumpelstiltskin.

"One of my favorite movies was TERMINATOR, and it's also that kind of structure, with a woman on the run, with a baby, and a monster going after her to get the baby. I don't think there's anything more inately scary and horrific than a mother losing her child. It's primal.

"And it's a much better movie than LEPRECHAUN. I can say that since I wrote them both. It's adult, with more defined characters. We shot in CinemaScope, our director of photography Doug Milsome did Costner's ROBIN HOOD, LONESOME DOVE, FULL METAL JACKET and many others. I was the luckiest guy in the world to get him. The results look like a \$20 million film."

Jones and his partner Mike Prescott were involved in early stages of story development for Trimark's LEPRECHAUN II, and have producer credit on that film, but when they got a green light for this RUMPELSTILTSKIN, they readily chose it instead. "It had a bigger budget and was more our picture," said Jones. "We couldn't do both—they were literally going at the same time."

One of the people Jones regarded as most helpful in getting the film done was Dino DeLaurentiis (ARMY OF DARKNESS), who originally put up the money. "He just let us make the film. He's a filmmaker—one

**“It’s not a true horror movie,” said Jones. “We wanted to come up with the next Freddy Krueger or Jason. It’s scary, patterned after Laughton’s Quasimodo.”**



**Biker Rumpel, the incongruities of updating a grim story, played for laughs.**

of the last of the old school like Harry Cohn and Louis B. Mayer. He lets other filmmakers make their movie. He kept his eyes on things, but didn't get involved in anything like ego. He said if you like it this way, go ahead. I can't say enough about him. I know he has a reputation, but both he and his wife Martha were really good to me. They were involved creatively and otherwise, and were very supportive. My sense is that everything he does is for one purpose only, and that is to have the best picture. And that you can't argue with."

Noted DeLaurentiis, who received no credit on the film, "What really interested me was the fairy tale from the Grimm Brothers, and also because I believe this picture is a franchise. It's a good character. It's not really a horror movie: it's funny. Full of laughter. I was very pleased with the dailies." After

DeLaurentiis got the ball rolling, the finished film was sold to Spelling Entertainment, which controls foreign distribution, and may release it domestically, or that may become the responsibility of sister company Paramount, or even another studio.

Max Grodenchik, known from his acting as Rom, Quark's Ferengi relative on DEEP SPACE NINE, recalled how he prepared for his work in the title role, "One of the first things I did was read the fairy tale. I figured there should be something very specific and interesting about the way he runs, so when you see him on the screen for the first time, you want to know more about him. I tried walking with a limp for a test, but Mark didn't like it. I'm glad he didn't. So I did away with it. The main thing was they wanted me to be small, to keep a low profile, stay as low to the ground as possible, and that made me walk in a spe-

cial way I developed a shuffle.

"I didn't want Rumpelstiltskin to be just a scary guy, a stock horror movie creature. I wanted him to have a real need for doing what he's doing. I guess what I got from Charles Laughton doing the Hunchback is that I wanted the audience to see his needs as much as the horrible things he does, the reasons he might do them. If he's sympathetic, and that's a big if, though I hope he is, it's perhaps due to his single-mindedness of purpose—he only wants one thing. He's not interested in killing just for the sake of killing. But if you're in his way, look out; he needs that baby, a fresh soul. He has opportunities to take children, or to have relations with the baby's mother, but he's not interested in that. He made a bargain—he's a dealmaker. In that way he's not unlike a Ferengi.

"What I like about the writing, what Mark Jones has done so wonderfully, is to keep him true to the fairy tale, where I think he's the best character. He's a man of his word, he has a bond, a code. Everyone else in that fairy tale is a slime. He even gives the miller's daughter a second chance. He's sympathetic toward her and says she can get out [of his deal] if she guesses his name. We don't even know that Rumpelstiltskin has any control over this. The powers that control the deal may be beyond him. The fact he is true to his bond makes him a sympathetic character. People may think it's an awful price to pay, but he doesn't feel that way. I'd like to see the audience shed a tear over him.

"I think the makeup helps a thousand percent. Mark wanted the character to be scary. When I got this job one of the first things I did was find out who was doing the makeup, and the people at DEEP SPACE NINE told me you couldn't find anyone better than Kevin Yagher to work with,

or knew better what he was doing. That immediately gave me enormous trust and respect for him."

Mitchell Coughlin, Yagher's assistant, who also worked on MAN'S BEST FRIEND, noted that Mark Jones specifically wanted to create a character who was not "just a little old man, but more deformed, zombie-like. We used pointy teeth, and contact lenses to [make] him into a character that wasn't human. The makeup is pretty involved, a seven piece overlapping appliance. Max couldn't wear the contact lenses very long because they really wore his eyes out, and they watered so much the makeup had to be constantly touched up. We ended up making a fairly thick piece for the forehead: probably a quarter inch in places, and the cheeks were thick too, so it was a challenge, with all that rubber on his face, to still have facial movement. But Max did very well with it because of the experience he's had as a Ferengi character." □

**Max Grodenchik, who plays Rom on DEEP SPACE NINE, in horror makeup designed by Kevin Yagher.**



**Kim Ulrich flees from an attacking zombie, milking the horror conventions.**

# BALTO

**Amblimation tackles true-life adventure from the dog's POV.**



Balto, the Alaskan sled dog.

*By Mike Lyons*

Snow is more than just falling flakes. This was the belief during production on *BALTO*, the latest feature from Amblimation, Steven Spielberg's animation studio. The film, set in 1925 and based on a true story, centers on a dog-sled team who cross the Alaskan wilderness and battle a ferocious blizzard, in order to bring medicine to the diphtheria stricken city of Nome. *BALTO*'s director Simon Wells knew from the outset that he wanted a departure from what we've come to expect from "animated snow." Noted Wells, "We wanted the blizzard to be something really special. The same way that *BACKDRAFT* concentrates on getting a lot of variety and flavors to the fire. We wanted to have that kind of diversity of character within the way the snow moved."

Creating a realistic, and yet different, force of nature was only one of the challenges facing *BALTO*'s production team. The first was taking a story by Cliff Ruby and Elana Lesser that seems better suited for live action, (such as Disney's *WHITE FANG*) and conforming it to animation. The twist to *BALTO* of course, is that it's the story of a dog-sled team, told from the perspective of the dogs, namely, the title character. Wells, who also helmed Amblimation's past two films, *AN AMERICAN*



The animators take some liberty with the facts, told from Balto's perspective, with his sidekick Boris, voiced by Bob Hoskins.

**TAIL: FEIVEL GOES WEST** (1991) and *WE'RE BACK* (1993), said that even though *BALTO* didn't contain any singing mice or dancing dinosaurs, he knew it would be perfect for animation. "This is a classic story. It has everything you want from animation. It's very emotional, it's very dramatic, it has a lot of really good characters. It struck a chord with us and we petitioned to do it."

The first thing the production team did was steep themselves in research. Extensive studies of photographs taken of the Alaskan wilderness were used to produce inspirational artwork. In addition to this, the entire crew of animators also studied live animals, in order to bring a sense of naturalism to the characters. "We had a period

of a gap between our last picture, *WE'RE BACK* and *BALTO*," said producer Stephen Hickner. "So we used that to put all of our animators through a training program of our own design to get them used to animating quadrupeds." The production studio, which was based in London, also met with a group of people in Northampton, who breed Siberian Huskies. "We got them to bring their dogs down to London to life drawing classes," said Wells, "and we also traveled up to watch their dogs running with a bizarre sort of tricycle machine that they have that simulates a sled."

As if this wasn't enough, Wells and other members of the crew undertook an actual dog-sled trip, not to Alaska but to Finland. "The general environment was going to be similar and what we really wanted to do was study the dogs," said Wells. "You can get an awful lot of the sense of what long shots look like from photographs and so on, but actually being involved in what it's like being on a dog-sled team, we thought we wanted to experience." The director summed up the trip in one heartfelt sentence, "It was unbelievably cold!" So cold, in fact that video cameras that the *BALTO* crew brought to shoot reference footage were rendered inoperable by the freezing temperatures. Of the toll the trip took on his production team,

Hickner joked, "Our next film is an animated *RETURN TO THE BLUE LAGOON*."

While so much time was taken painstakingly researching the look of the film, the crew of *BALTO* knew that, even though the film is based on historical events, they didn't want to limit themselves by sticking to the facts. "We did a lot of studies of Nome at the time," noted Wells, who added, "But, it has to be admitted that there are fairly large liberties taken with the story, because the original events of the 1925 diphtheria serum run involved something like 24 different teams of dogs running a relay and we felt that what we wanted to do was concentrate on a limited number of characters who we could really identify with and get that 'emotional thing' going. If you try and have literally a hundred characters you'd never be able to concentrate on what was the real drive of the story."

When *BALTO* was finally moved into actual animation production, computers were brought in to bring some of the film's more difficult visual elements to life. Computer generated imagery (CGI) helped create the sled, an Aurora Borealis sequence, and, of course, the all-important snow. David Moorehead, who was in charge of the CGI for *BALTO*, created the blizzard through the use of a computer "particle system," which gave depth to what otherwise would have been a myriad





Based on a true story, the dogs bring medicine to save the people of Nome.

number of tiny specks.

"Generating the snow was only part of the battle," said Moorehead. "The real battle was being able to implement it with the rest of our digital processes and make it an easy production tool, where Simon could easily direct it and the animator could easily animate it." Moorehead added that it's been a fascinating experience to work with CGI, as the technology continues to unfold with each passing day. "We're constantly pushing the limits in what they're capable of doing. In animation you have a certain freedom that you don't have in the real world for live-action special effects."

A more traditional aspect found in *BALTO* is the concept of well-rounded character development, especially of the lead character, an outcast who's given the chance to redeem himself in the eyes of others. Of the character Balto, Wells said, "The town that he lives near doesn't trust him because he's half-wolf. He has dubious parentage. He's not allowed to be part of the dog-sled team, nor is he really trusted by any of the townsfolk and this is unfair because he's actually a very good and noble creature. It's not until the disaster strikes the town that he sees this as his opportunity to show what he's really made of."

In order to balance the scales, the filmmakers gave equal thought to *BALTO*'s villain, Steele, the "golden boy" champion sled-dog who leads

the team and feels threatened by Balto. "He becomes the reason why the sled team fails to get through," said Wells. "He gets rattled, he gets lost, he panics, he pretty much screws the whole thing up and then, even when Balto shows up to try and help them, he's too tied up in his own ego to realize that Balto can actually be of aid to them."

As with their past two films, *Amblimation* has lined up an impressive cast of actors to help "flesh out" the characters, including Kevin Bacon as Balto and veteran voice actor Jim Cummings, (*Darkwing Duck*, the *Tazmanian Devil* and *THE LION KING*'s Ed the hyena) as Steele. In addition, Bob Hoskins lends his voice to Boris the snow goose, and, according to Wells,

**"This is a classic story," said director Simon Wells. "It has everything you want from animation—emotion, drama, and really good characters."**

proved to be a great catalyst in the shaping of the character. "He had an enormous affect on the way that character behaved and the warmth in that character. In the original writing, he's very bad tempered, but getting that sense of 'what he's saying is not really what he's meaning' that is to say, although he is being bad tempered, he's actually caring very deeply. That kind of level of complexity and subtlety comes from the actor and then the animator can feed from that and illustrate it in his work."

In addition to Boris, Balto also encounters two polar bears, Muck and Luck, who are both voiced by singer Phil Collins, who according to Wells, actively pursued the role. "Phil's never done a voice for animation before. He was very keen to do it and actually contacted us to do the voice. Then came up with this voice for Muck that was just head and shoulders better than anything else we heard."

All of this adds up to a film that will include not only creative and innovative character and scenic animation, but also an affirming theme of all of us having a place and a purpose in the world, and stressing the age-

old "don't judge a book by its cover" adage. Producer Hickner said that it's been exciting to work on *BALTO* in the midst of the current animation resurgence. "When I started, animation was definitely in its last throws of dying. At the time, the studios were fighting to send the work overseas, so basically the difference between the late '70s and early '80s, when the best you could hope for was to be working period, and now, is that we get to choose which projects interest us the most."

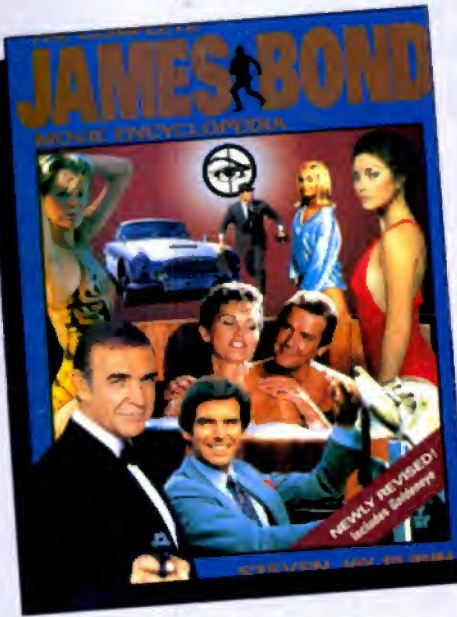
Interesting projects are definitely what's ahead for *Amblimation*, which will soon become part of *DreamWorks*, the new studio Steven Spielberg recently initiated with David Geffen and Jeffrey Katzenberg. The studio's first animated film will be *THE PRINCE OF EGYPT*, a re-telling of the Ten Commandments story, slated for a Christmas 1998 release. So, what's it like going from the Alaskan wilderness to the sands of Egypt? "Quite a relief actually," laughed Wells, and Hickner quipped, "The research trips are warmer!" And, of course, they won't have to animate one, single, solitary flake of snow. □

Lady and the sled-dog: Balto and Jenna. Universal opens the ambitious cartoon feature nationwide December 22.

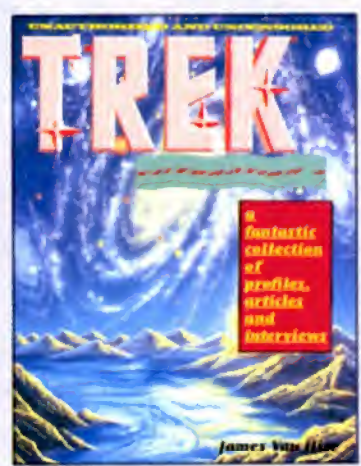


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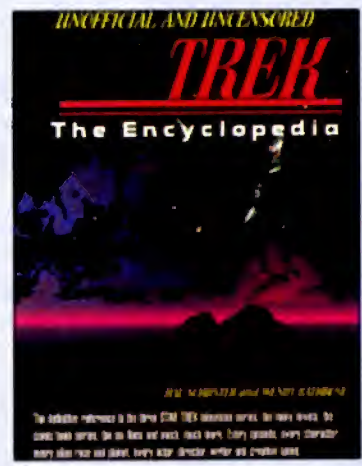
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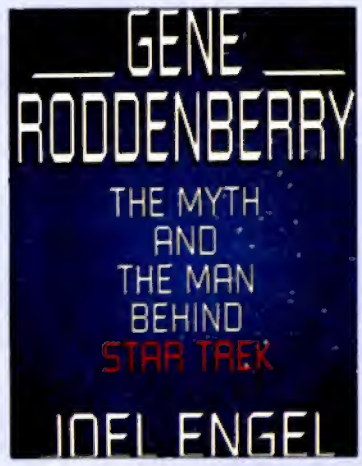
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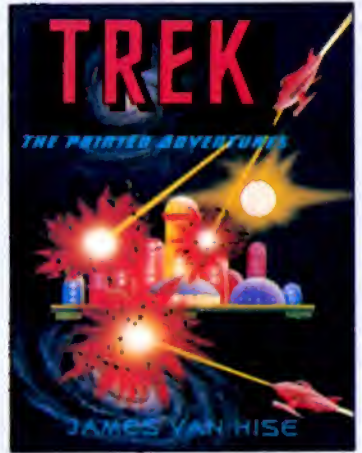
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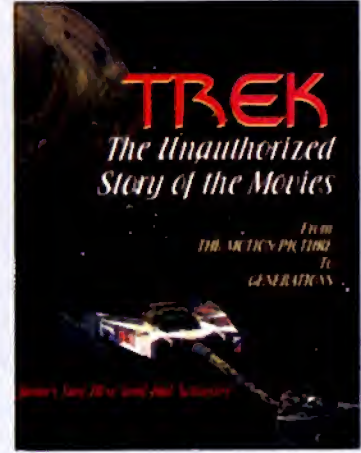
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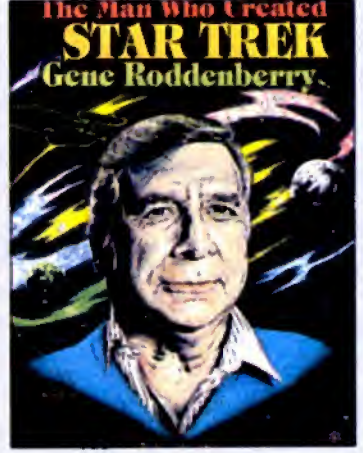
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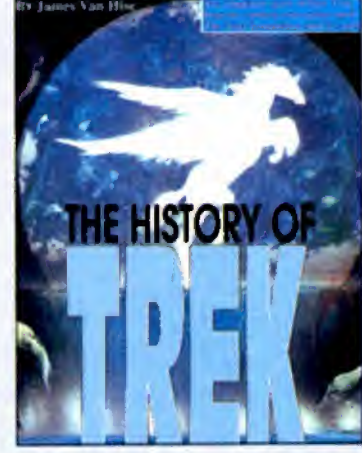
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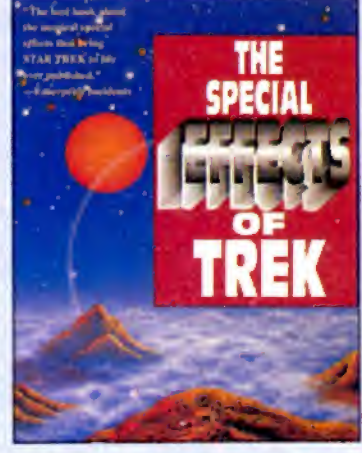
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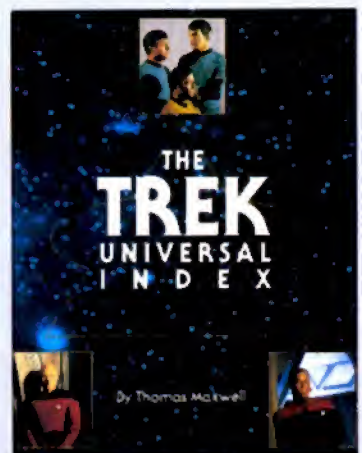
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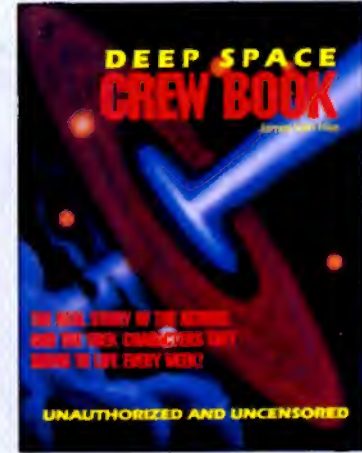
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# REVIEWS

## FILM RATINGS

- Must See
- Excellent
- Good
- Mediocre
- Poor

### ARABIAN KNIGHT

Directed by Richard Williams. Miramax. 8/95, 72 mins. Voices: Vincent Price, Matthew Broderick, Jonathan Winters.

Animation historian John Canemaker once said that Otto Messmer, the creator of Felix the Cat, was an animator who celebrated "cartoon as cartoon." The same can be said of Richard Williams. *ARABIAN KNIGHT*, his eagerly awaited film, is such an exploration of the boundless limits of animation that it is, without a doubt, one of the best non-Disney animated features ever made.

*ARABIAN KNIGHT* is a surrealist kaleidoscope of a film. Williams has taken a little Salvador Dali, mixed in some *YELLOW SUBMARINE* and added a pinch of Tex Avery screwball. But, with *WHO FRAMED ROGER RABBIT*, *RAGGEDY ANN & ANDY* and the Academy Award-winning cartoon short, *A CHRISTMAS CAROL*, to his credit, it's evident that Williams has never been one to simply rest on other people's styles. In *ARABIAN KNIGHT*, he employs a distinct, offbeat look at the characters and sense of constant movement to the animation, that at times is truly mesmerizing.

The story bears a strong resemblance to *ALADDIN*: a petty thief and a poor cobbler save a kingdom from an evil wizard, and the cobbler wins the heart of the princess. All other comparisons end beyond these small story points, however, and *ARABIAN KNIGHT* takes on its own unique tone.

The film also makes great use of its voices, especially the late Vincent Price, who, as he did with Ratigan in Disney's *GREAT MOUSE DETECTIVE*, truly relished wrapping his maniacal voice around a bad guy. In *ARABIAN KNIGHT*, he has great fun speaking in constant rhyme, as the evil sorcerer Zig-Zag, a blue-faced meanie with a black-flowing robe. At the other end of the spectrum is Jonathan Winters as the Thief. His one-liners and adlibs manage to fill some of the film's more quiet moments with humor, even if his constant contemporary references grow stale.

Production on the film began 20-some-odd years ago, under the title *THE THIEF AND THE COBBLER*, and updates through the years had many in the industry clamoring for a glimpse at it. Recently, it was reported that the film had been taken away from Williams and changes had been made. This is evident in *ARABIAN KNIGHT*'s climax, which at times, seems sloppily edited and in Winters' monologue, which, at times, seems as



Kevin Alber as Bram Stoker in Roger Corman's *BURIAL OF THE RATS*, kidnapped by female terrorists in a fictionalized account of his early life.

if it was looped during post-production.

After all the work that went into it, the film was released late last summer, with very little fanfare and no pre-release screenings for the press. This however, doesn't taint the overall experience of enjoying *ARABIAN KNIGHT* and celebrating "cartoon as cartoon."

●●● Mike Lyons

### BRAM STOKER'S BURIAL OF THE RATS

Directed by Dan Golden. Showtime. 8/95. 76 mins. With: Adrienne Barbeau, Maria Ford, Kevin Alber, Olga Kabo, Linnea Quigley.

This is a ludicrous and mutton-headed fantasy which reveals a little-known and totally fictitious episode in the early life of Bram Stoker (Kevin Alber), who is kidnapped by a group of female terrorists. Just when he is about to be killed, their leader, the Queen of Vermin (Adrienne Barbeau) discovers he can write, and decides to keep him around for PR purposes. In gratitude that someone at last appreciates his writing, Stoker joins the all-girl crew (and their piranha-like rats, who can kill someone clean down to their skeleton, leaving no messy blood or organs, in under two minutes) on their midnight raids to kill the unrighteous. Thrown into this mess is a "Pit and Pendulum" sequence, which hardly seems surprising for executive producer Roger Corman, who often used to steal from Lovecraft and advertise the end result as Poe.

Male audiences will no doubt appreciate the cheesy fur bikinis the Rat Women wear, the frequent topless dancing sequences, and the occasional shots of full nudity and close-ups of bare buttocks. I guess it is naive to be amazed that two of the three credited screenwriters—S.P. Somtow, Tara McCann and Daniella Purrell—are women, the third being paperback hor-

ror writer S.P. Somtow.

Kevin Alber as Stoker seems more like a wimpy stand-in for Corey Feldman, with a surfer-dude accent and pony-tail; and even Adrienne Barbeau has a hard time looking butch because almost every scene requires her to play a flute in some misguided Pied Piper allusion.

God knows where or when the action is meant to be set. No one seems to have any kind of accent; certainly not British, and the wigs, costumes, settings and references to the dungeons of St. Cecile seem to favor the French Revolution.

But if you think you'd enjoy seeing a short film containing characters called "Sleazy Prostitute" and "Naked Prostitute" or any film which contains even brief footage of Linnea Quigley, then this film is obviously for you.

○ Judith P. Harris

### DARKMAN II: THE RETURN OF DURANT

Directed by Bradford May. MCA Home Ent. 7/95. 93 mins. With: Arnold Vosloo, Larry Drake, Kim Delaney, Renee O'Connor.

Sam Raimi's *DARKMAN* never overcame its inherent unbelievability in which tall, gaunt Dr. Peyton loses most of his skin, develops synthetic flesh which will only last precisely 99 minutes, which he uses to disguise himself as the short, stocky villain Robert G. Durant. Instead, Raimi revealed in it.

Bradford May (director of photography on Phil DeGuere's revived *TWILIGHT ZONE* series) directs this equally unfeasible sequel, but without Raimi's assaultive yet lively visual sense. While Larry Drake (*DR. GIGGLES*) returns as Durant after a prolonged coma, hardly the worse for wear for having his helicopter smashed into a highway overpass, Arnold Vosloo (*HARD TARGET*) takes over as Westlake, who has built an intricate

rail system throughout the city's sewers and who continues to seek out a synthetic flesh which won't dissolve in light.

While there are a few neat ideas and action aplenty, the whole concept doesn't really add up to much. *Darkman* is a potentially interesting tormented superhero with echoes of Batman, the Shadow and the Phantom of the Opera, who finances his elaborate operation with money stolen from drug dealers, but this story leaves him mostly self-obsessed and self-serving. Screenwriter Steven McKay doesn't seem to care much about credibility or creating interesting characters. The most remarkable thing about *DARKMAN II* is that it is the first direct-to-video feature to be released in a widescreen version.

● Dennis Fischer

### GALAXIS

Directed by William Mesa. Osmosis Pictures. 1995. 90 mins. With: Brigitte Nielsen, Richard Moll, John H. Brennan, Fred Asparagus.

This one starts with a bang and one is teased that the film may actually be better than the sum of its actors. While the special effects work, particularly the miniatures, is choppy, still, the detail is there and one begins to think a diamond has been found or at least something bright and shiny worth showing to others.

Brigitte Nielsen plays Hadeira, warrior of a people inhabiting a distant planet. The film opens with the planet under attack and Hadeira's people being slaughtered, showcasing nicely detailed miniatures. Somehow, Hadeira survives the wrath of the evil Kyla, played to the tee by Richard Moll, and using some magic technology, manages to get to Earth. Kyla is after a crystal which will enable him to rule the universe, or at least more of the universe than he already owns. The one piece of crystal remaining is on Earth. The film soon devolves into another silly tale of aliens running around Los Angeles.

The acting is surprisingly good, given the players, but maybe that's because the script they're working with has so little depth. Directed by William Mesa, one of the developers of the Introvision effects process.

●● David Wilt

### HARRISON BERGERON

Directed by Bruce Pittman. Showtime. 8/95. 100 mins. With: Sean Astin, Miranda DePencier, Christopher Plummer, Buck Henry, Eugene Levy, Howie Mandel, Andrea Martin.

By the year 2053, the Constitution has been rewritten to say that since not all men have been created equal it's the government's job to *make* them equal. The entire population must wear bands on their heads which transmit "electrical intrusions" to keep the population dumb. For Harrison Bergeron (Sean Astin), the treatment doesn't work, and he's been left back at school four years running for getting all A's. On the eve

of government-mandated corrective brain surgery to take care of his problem, Harrison is recruited by a top secret organization which really runs the world, an elitist oligarchy which flaunts the rules they set for everyone else.

Scripter Arthur Crimm fleshes out Kurt Vonnegut's seven-page story into a clever and involving plot in which the whole population is handicapped in order to prevent envy of anyone who might excel. Although set in the future, the production design, hairstyles, cars, costumes and musical score very much reflect the 1950s, based on the premise this was the last time the average American was truly happy.

The case is peppered with cameos, the most amusing of which is Buck Henry as the smug head of TV programming, eliminating any vestige of humor, education or flavor from all shows. This TV movie is chock full of ideas and deserves to become a candidate for frequent revivals.

●●● Judith P. Harris

## GIANT ROBO: THE NIGHT THE EARTH STOOD STILL

Directed by Yasuhiro Imagawa. Manga Video. 6/95, 90 mins. Animation.

It's hard to pin down the precise appeal of GIANT ROBO: THE NIGHT THE EARTH STOOD STILL, the anime series whose first two installments have been strung together by Manga Video to form a sort of feature-length cliffhanger. Is it that director Yasuhiro Imagawa has taken the pulpish, campy scenarios of a traditional comic book and wrapped it in production values far lusher than one would anticipate (imagine Steven Spielberg attempting a big-budget remake of GIGANTOR)? Is it the surrealistically saturated color palate, and the semi-Rococo visual design that looks as if Winsor McKay had been born a century late and half a world away? Whatever it is, it results in 90 minutes of dazzling visuals and intense action, all set to a pounding, orchestral score. Even if the characters look a bit too cartoony for contemporary anime standards, GIANT ROBO consistently proves itself more worthy of its claim to hyperbolic drama than BATMAN FOREVER.

●● Dan Persons

## MUTE WITNESS

Directed by Anthony Waller. Sony Pictures. 10/95, 98 mins. With: Marina Sudina, Fay Ripley, Evan Richards, Oleg Jankowskij.

Here is an unpretentious, DePalmaesque thriller that packs more wallop than many a big studio production. An American director is making a slasher film in Russia, encountering all the on-set problems that entails. Russian actress Marina Sudina plays Billy, a young, mute special effects makeup artist working on the film. Returning to the studio one night Billy witnesses the filming of a snuff film. She is quickly drawn into a dangerous world where a major player is the crime czar known only as the Reaper. The conceit here is that the Reaper is played by a "mystery guest star" whose scenes were actually filmed several years ago. The



Marina Sudina as Billy, the mute Russian special effects makeup artist who gets terrorized after watching the shooting of a snuff film in MUTE WITNESS.

suspense is almost unrelenting from the grisly murder to the explosive finale. Anthony Waller as the triple threat producer, writer and director in his feature film debut makes the best of his Russian locations, even using the studio itself as his prime set. Whether trying to call attention to her plight or desperately trying to use the high-tech phone equipment while a killer smashes down her door, Sudina is terrific. She exudes the vulnerability yet grit of a '90s woman facing a landscape of ever-changing dangers where a man can be a welcome police officer one moment and a killer the next. Here is a sleeper that should wake up an audience and keep them glued to the screen.

●● Dan Scapperotti

## THE NET

Directed by Irwin Winkler. Columbia. 7/95, 118 mins. With: Sandra Bullock, Dennis Miller, Jeremy Northam.

The Talking Heads' "Once in a Lifetime" has more to say about identity slippage in its five minutes than this film can muster in its whole two hours. Computer whiz Sandra Bullock stumbles upon an evil conspiracy to...uh...well...do something evil (we're never sure what), and as a result has her life turned around by bad guys who can slip into computer systems and alter plane schedules, devalue credit ratings, edit police records, etc., etc. THE NET promises a not-bad, if somewhat neo-Luddite, reflection on the all-pervasive nature of modern information technology, but is instead fouled by poor plotting—Bullock is a naive punching bag—and by some of the worst writing in recent memory (at the end, a bad guy is described as having been arrested "in his exclusive, New York penthouse," as opposed to all those other penthouses where just anybody can stroll in). My nominee for Poor Dumb Bastard of the Year: the psychiatrist/ex-boyfriend played by Dennis Miller, who keeps winding up in situations where the bad guys can surreptitiously dose him with lethal quantities of drugs.

● Dan Persons

## NOT OF THIS EARTH

Directed by Terence Winkless. Showtime. 9/95, 87 mins. With: Michael York, Parker Stevenson, Elizabeth Barondes, Richard Belzer, Ted Davis, Mason Adams.

I was lucky enough to see the 1956 version of NOT OF THIS EARTH at the movies when I was a kid: it impressed me then and, while rarely seen today, it still holds up pretty well. The less said about Jim Wynorski's dismal 1988 version, the better. While it was virtually a word-for-word remake, the acting was so atrocious, it was an affront to the memory of the original. Now Roger Corman has gone back to the well again and, *quelle surprise*, come up with the best of the three editions. Faithful to the original in all essentials, this is a funnier, hipper story written this time by Charles Philip Moore, who is obviously a talent to watch.

Michael York would certainly be my last choice to play even the subtlest comedy, but he turns in a delightful performance as the eccentric Mr. Johnson. Moving his head in the birdlike manner used by Jeff Bridges in STARMAN, and talking in a clipped deadpan using dictionary words rather than colloquialism, York is a howl. The effects are everything one could have wished for in the original (which was in moody black and white). John Buechler admirably hits the bullseye with a varied number of squishy, juicy, tentacled, disgusting alien creatures and artifacts and also plays the alien whom York talks to on his intergalactic walkie-talkie.

Sadly, Elizabeth Barondes is no Beverly Garland, but like Traci Lords, who played the role in the 1988 remake, we see her bare-breasted, so perhaps few will quibble with her casting. Richard Belzer basically plays himself (mouthing-off obnoxiously and calling all the other characters "Babe") as York's seedy and highly suspicious chauffeur; and Mason Adams is the unlucky blood doctor York chooses to treat his odd ailment. It's a shame this went directly to Showtime cable because this film is certainly good

enough for theatrical release and probably will eventually migrate to those midnight showings of cult favorites.

●●● Judith P. Harris

## THE OMEN

Directed by Jack Sholder. NBC. 8/95, 60 mins. With: Brett Cullen, Chelsea Fields, William Sadler, Norman Lloyd, Julie Carmen, Steven Williams.

This unsold pilot has no connection to the Fox film series, but postulates that evil is a contagious disease which is intelligent enough to find the perfect host, like Hitler, in order to do the maximum damage. It jumps from person to person by means of a CGI effect similar to the water tentacle from THE ABYSS when the host opens his or her mouth. Norman Lloyd plays a man who has been hunting this evil for 50 years with Simon Wiesenthal-like dedication. The set-up shows him turning over this task to a new triumvirate, Brett Cullen, a reporter whose wife and child were victims; William Sadler, an epidemiologist whose friend was a victim; and Chelsea Fields (who sadly has lost her British accent), a nurse who briefly served as host to the entity and now has a fortuitous psychic link to it.

No writer was credited, but the script bears more than passing resemblance to THE X-FILES, particularly in dragging in recent alarmist by-products of science gone awry, including noxious fumes from a patient's blood in the emergency room. Another X-FILES reminder was the presence in a guest-starring role of X, himself, Steven Williams as a doctor deliberately developing a form of flesh-eating bacteria which could decimate an entire army in three hours. The pilot was filmed in X-FILES' British Columbia.

The concept also brings to mind THE HIDDEN, also directed by Jack Sholder, with the evil entity passing from guest star to guest star in future episodes, if this had been sold as a series; and, a less happy resemblance to the syndicated FRIDAY THE 13TH TV series in which a trio of do-gooders felt compelled to fight evil every week.

●● Judith P. Harris

## THE WASP WOMAN

Directed by Jim Wynorski. Showtime. 8/95, 87 mins. With: Jennifer Rubin, Doug Wert, Maria Ford, Melissa Brasselle, Daniel J. Travanti, Gerrit Graham.

Aside from the car crashes and nudity which are signatures for any Jim Wynorski film, THE WASP WOMAN seemed almost too faithful to the 1959 Roger Corman film which starred Susan Cabot and Anthony Eisley. Take away the nudity and this is quite old-fashioned, another variation on JEKYLL AND HYDE, where a chemical potion has intermittent side effects which cause the experimenter to turn monstrously ugly and kill people.

The special effects creature designed by Greg Aronowitz stands up well in close-ups, as does an old-age makeup on Jennifer Rubin, the removal of which allows her to revert to how she really looks in order to demonstrate the positive effects of the experimental wasp extract. Amusingly, the queen wasp she turns into has better cleavage than the anorexic Rubin does herself.

●● Judith P. Harris

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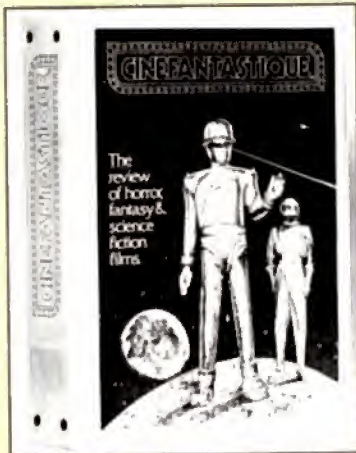
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## FROM DUSK TILL DAWN

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with a story that yearns to be told.

"The plan was that after I finished PULP, I would go and take six months to a year off and just kind of enjoy life, regenerate and then start writing the next thing I'm going to do," said Tarantino. "I have about 16 ideas—any one of them I could do but I'm not in love with any of them.

"They're kind of all over the map," admitted Tarantino, about possible future projects. "There are all these different kinds of genres I'd like to work in: like a World War II movie, westerns, spy stuff, a couple of other horror ideas and everything including a couple of other gangster film ideas. The only problem with, I guess, the attention that happened because of PULP, is you can't help but be a touch self-conscious about what you do next. And, I've never been self-conscious about what I wanted to do before. I fell in love with something and I did it."

Tarantino, Rodriguez and their cohorts represent a new breed and the hope is that their best work has yet to be seen. "It's been incredibly intimidating," joked set decorator Felipe Fernandez, about working with Hollywood's newest golden boys. "They're the next generation

of Hollywood. It seems like Hollywood is changing...the old regime is fading out."

## VIRTUAL VOYAGER

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ager enters what it thinks is a nebula, only to discover it is a living organism. The effects sequences required the *Voyager* to pass through several layers of the organism, straining even the capabilities of Santa Barbara Studios given the limitations on time and budget. "'The Cloud' was a tough one," said Moore. "Usually you're fighting the money and time to a certain extent, but nothing like you do with the computer stuff. Time becomes even more important. We weren't as happy as we could have been with the final product. We got to a point where the stuff looked great, but usually we get something and take it in the bay and tweak it, then marry everything together. The very last stuff that came through in 'The Cloud' was just rushed through that stage and it can hurt you if you're not careful."

Still, Moore marvels at the new possibilities his new toys grant him. Even a year ago, the sequences in "The Cloud" would have been created by more conventional methods—filmed elements altered and composited in a digital

effects bay. "That happens every year. You walk into a bay the first week of the season and they have a new toy to play with. And what you don't have one year you can't live without the next."

## MORPHING EFFECTS

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on the plate is writhing when Rene is in the shot, then when I shoot the blue-screen character I have to have that person make matching movements that will keep them locked together."

Using a video playback of Odo's reactions shot on the stage, Neufeld and Curry coached the actor, Lawrence Pressman, who portrayed the evil Changeling, to match the movements on the blue-screen stage. Other effects tricks were employed to ease the difficulty of matching movement: Odo's torso was rendered with CGI, and the shot was framed with the attacking changeling's elbow out of the frame. "You see the arm go off the frame and his forearm come back in and touch Rene," explained Neufeld. "We actually performed an optical zoom on one of the shots to keep the elbow off the frame. That allowed us to cut the blue screen off and actually track the forearm itself."

The final shot in the sequence

appears to be an elaborate pan in which Odo throws the bad Changeling onto the *Defiant's* warp core. In actuality, that particular shot was filmed in wide-screen anamorphic format. This gave the computer animators a stable background plate to reference and animate on. Once the effects were complete, an optical pan was performed over the shot, similar to the panning performed on wide-screen films when re-edited for television and video.

## VOYAGER DESIGN

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of soap. The whole dish area is very high and then the part behind the dish is very short so if you're shooting from the top, you have to get very high up to see the back. It makes it look very fast and zippy, but it presents a problem. You have to find the angle that shows as much of the model as possible and it's important to light it well. We tend to backlight it, then you get all the detail and surface shadowing coming at the camera. The underside is the most attractive angle. What really sells the size are the larger windows. You especially get that in the pilot, in the tight shot of the front when *Voyager* is leaving DS9. It's kind of pushing forward very slowly and it works well."

# LETTERS

## LAUREL ENTERTAINMENT, R.I.P

In your recent coverage of *THE LANGOLIERS* [26:5:51], you failed to mention a significant, if unfortunate, milestone. *THE LANGOLIERS* was Laurel Entertainment's final production. As a result of "reorganization" following the Viacom/Paramount/Blockbuster merger, and with absolutely no publicity or fanfare, Laurel Entertainment was dissolved early this year. It is no more.

Having worked as Laurel's senior story editor for six years, I can attest to the fact that Laurel was a unique and exceptional place to work. Not only will its passing be missed by those of us who were part of the company, but by all fans of the genre.

Best known for its long-term and productive relationship with Stephen King, leading to projects including *PET SEMATARY*, *GOLDEN YEARS*, *THE STAND* and *THE LANGOLIERS*, Laurel was also responsible for the ground-breaking original syndicated series *TALES FROM THE DARKSIDE*, and its follow-up series, *MONSTERS*.

Laurel demonstrated, in the seven years that these shows were in production, that talent and imagination could frequently yield results far superior to other series with vastly greater budgets and resources and, though I'm certainly prejudiced, I believe that the best of *MONSTERS* and *DARKSIDE* compares favorably to the best horror and fantasy ever produced for television.

From the beginning, Laurel had an "open submission" policy—which meant that we'd look at scripts from anybody—one of the few companies willing to do so—and a number of beginning writers (including me) saw their first professional work produced and aired as a result of Laurel's openness to new talent. Laurel also gave similar opportunities to many talented beginning directors.

While Richard Rubinstein and Mitch Galink, the former president and vice president of Laurel, have regrouped and are currently working on a feature version of *THINNER*, the Laurel "family" has, I'm afraid, been spread to the four winds. It was a special company with a special vision. Being part of it was an invaluable experience for me both creatively and person-

ally.

From *DAWN OF THE DEAD* to *THE LANGOLIERS*, Laurel holds a unique place in the history of the genre and its passing is cause for all fans of *cinéfantastique* to mourn.

Neal Stevens  
Brooklyn, NY 11218

## REN & STIMPY, REMEMBER THEM AS THEY WERE

*REN & STIMPY* are dead? [26:6/27:1:99] Gee, I thought that happened two years ago. The details of their journeys since I gave them up for dead are fascinating in much the same way a five-car pile-up is fascinating.... Try to remember them as they were, when they were at the top.

When I first saw R&S I said, "This is light-years ahead of anything else out there," and they still are today. Yeah, I wanted new episodes as eagerly as my parents want me to have kids, but so what? I could watch those episodes again and forever. They are timeless.

You don't like *Rocko's Modern Life*? What? R&S was a terrific send-up of the '50s family values and their heroes. RML is a send-up of the '80s, and '90s over-indulgence, government bureaucracy, the trials of being a poor single guy, and the general paranoia of it all. Oh well, to each his own. (It's your loss anyway.)

Thank God Duckman is on USA and not Nickelodeon. I doubt the episodes with "the Twins" would have made it past concept stage. Lastly, I heard that Kricfalusi (creator of R&S) was working on a project called the *Ripping Friends*. What ever became of it?

William Angus  
Maywood, NJ 07607

[John K. said that the *RIPPING FRIENDS* feature is on hold, at least until Spumco gets other projects under way.]

## TOKYO BABYLON'S GENDER BENDER

Dan Persons evaluates the anime film *TOKYO BABYLON 2* [26"6/27:1:122] and advises that audiences "avoid at all costs the dubbed version, which tries to advance the proposition that the clearly female [protagonist] Subaru is actually male."

Actually, the character Subaru Sumeragi is male.

In the Japanese-language

videos, Subaru is articulated by popular male voice actor Kappei Yamaguchi. Furthermore, Subaru distinctly refers to himself with the exclusively male personal pronoun *boku*; his twin older sister Hokuto uses the female counterpart, *atashi*. In the original stories, Subaru repeatedly attempts to brush off the amorous solicitations of his mentor, Seishiro Sakurazuka, by insisting that he is indeed a boy (this fails to discourage the gently persistent Seishiro).

The *TOKYO BABYLON* movies are based on works drawn from the notorious *shojo-manga* genre of Japanese comic books, which is aimed at a young female audience. Hallmarks of *shojo-manja* include elements of homoeroticism and feminine male heroes. Those who enjoy the anime may want to check out Japanese bookstores for the original manja; the surprising resolution of the Seishiro-Subaru relationship and the nature of Subaru's recurring dream are revealed therein. Seven volumes were produced by the talented, four-woman team of artist-writers CLAMP between 1990 and 1993, and are currently being reprinted by Shinshokan.

Cherry Suzuki  
Pearl City, HI 96782

[Several anime-savvy friends have since pointed out the discrepancy to me; I've re-screened the Japanese-language tape, and yeah, it does look like Subaru's androgyny is a tad more pronounced than I had first thought. This does nothing to alter my opinion of the series: *TOKYO BABYLON 2* is less than impressive. Dan Persons]

## IN LOVE WITH ROBOCOP

I saw your "In Memorium" note in a recent issue regretting the decline of *ROBOCOP* [26:5:5]. Indeed it is tragic—even criminal—that the producers of the so-called sequels and the utterly worthless series didn't follow through on the real potentials of *ROBOCOP*, namely, his budding humanity and how he deals with his past and his present, as well as how others react to him. As it is, he might as well have been a mere machine, with no more of a soul than the Terminator. If the sequels and series had emphasized his human side, and shown him behaving like a man standing up for himself rather than letting others (and his program-

ming) control him like a puppet, they would have been vastly superior stories. But the jerks making the films didn't want that, they wanted what they thought would sell. (And it didn't.)

Maybe there is a way to breathe new life into Robo's life story. Some friends of mine and I have come up with a basic idea: Robocop meets a woman engineer and they fall in love. What do you think of our idea of a RoboRomance?

Freya E. Harris  
Atlanta, GA 30342  
RoboJay@aol.com

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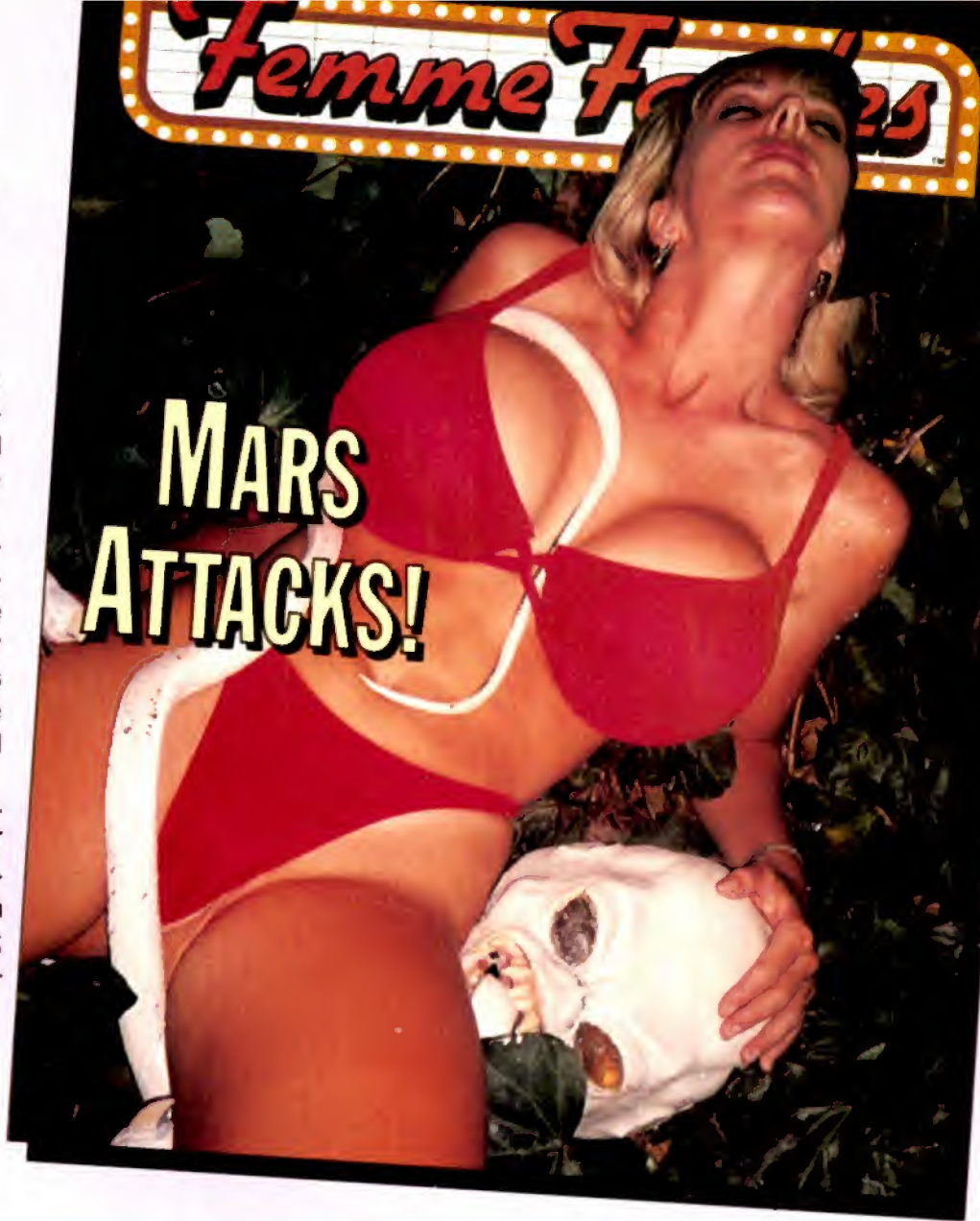
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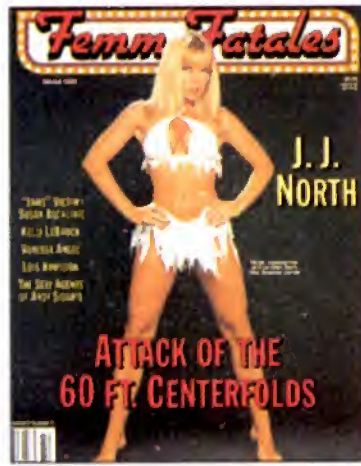
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